

Jamie Theakston's party tips ★ Rob Williams

19 March 1997 ★ 85p

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Just Seventeen

Stars attack

Mysterious girl

Make him wanna
get close to **YOU!**

Soap cop-era
Spunky Aussies
in their cossies!

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TOP TRUE LIFE!

'I dress like a
Spice Girl... but
I'm a boy!'

'Engaged at
the age of 14'

'Solvents killed
my best mate'

Starry spring-scopes

Your **astro guide to**
the frisky season



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Just Seventeen

19 March 1997

Michael's letter

Well hellooo! Looking out the Teen Towers window right now, I can see playful lambs prancing, rabbits shaking their fluffy tails at the sun-tinged sky and daffodils dipping in the breeze. Well, actually I can see a multi-storey carpark and the back door to Pizzaland, but you get the picture. The frisky season's upon us, brave ravers, and this week's the 'Sev has got more spring than Michael Jordan.

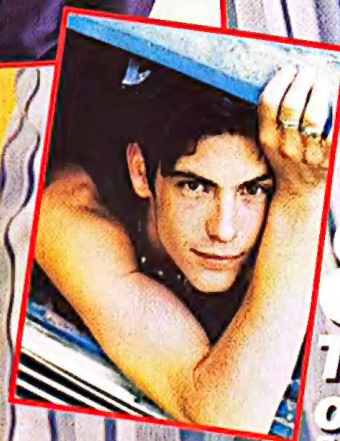
We're talking horoscopes. We're talking Jamie Theakston's cheesy-straw stories. And we're talking soap blokes who are, ahem, big Down Under. So dust down your hotpants and get page-turning.



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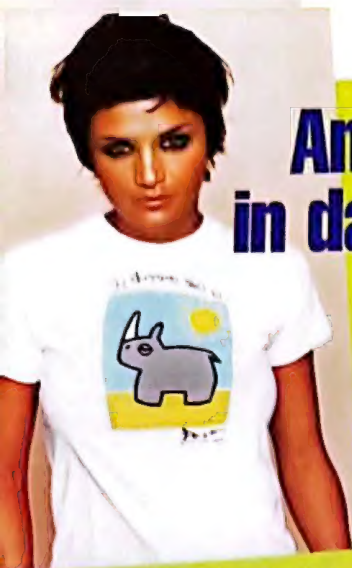
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Model: Anna Lewin
Photo: Suki Jones
Hair and make-up: Claire Ray
Top: Chatters



Animals in danger

Buy one of these cropped rhino T-shirts (kid's large size) from the charity **Tusk Force** and you'll be helping endangered species.

The T-shirt (as worn here by Helena Christensen) is yours for a mere **£9** (incl p&p). Send cheques/postal orders (payable to Tusk Force Ltd) to: Tusk Force Merchandise, Ravenscourt House, 123 Askew Road, London W12 9AU.

Under a fiver



Keep your digits decorated with these cute coloured rings from Freedom at **Top Shop**. They're available in two colours and brilliantly priced at **£3** each. There's never been a better time to ring the changes!



Eye to eye

Miss Selfridge's Kiss and Make Up eyeshadow collection has gone all sexy and iridescent, with two-tone shadows ranging from soft, buttery browns to lilac 'n' lime. Priced at just **£3** each, a girl can well afford to be two-faced.

Hurrah for **Ad 'n' Lara** as they take their blood pressure and scream...

what a



Bedside manners

As you read this, top weep-fest movie *The English Patient* is showing in your local fleapit. To mark the occasion, **J17** has compiled a list of its five fave docs – the medicine men who we'd like to nurse us back to rude health...

★ Dr John Carter (*ER*)

We'd love to be treated at Country General by Noah Wyle's character. Not only is he a caring sort, he also had an affair with a patient suffering with an arse-related prob. Whadda guy.



★ Dr Richard McCaig

(*Casualty*) Holby General's sauciest white-coat (played

by Gray O'Brien) mixed work 'n' play when he got fruity with nurse Gloria. One thing though, Rich – those waistcoats *have* to go.

★ Dr Michael Mancini (*Melrose Place*)

He's a mean 'n' mad medic, born to make your pulse rate soar. Played by Tomas Calabro, the doc changed from newly-wed goody-goody to seductive baddie before our very eyes. Nurse, the screens!



★ Owen Springer (*Reckless*)

OK, so he may wear horrible pants and not really be up to speed acting-wise, but there's something sexy about croonin' Robson Green's new role. The only prob is, he's saucing up the boss's wife. And she's about 85. Don't do it, Robbo!

★ **Hilary Jones (*GMTV*)** The semi-spiked mullet. That ever-so-caring breakfast-side manner. There's no real-life TV doc more alluring than our Thrillary. But then, anyone could look like a sex god when sat next to Eamonn Holmes...

Everything's rosy

Real roses wither, unlike this pretty, pink rose paperweight – just £5 from Miss Selfridge. Simply give it a shake and savour its glittery snowstorm!



Gobsmacked!



"I don't mind being recognised when I'm looking dog rough with no make-up on – it's nice that people know who I am." Mel C on the price of fame.

Win win win

Get your senses around this new limited edition fragrance from Los Angeles. Giorgio Aire (only available March '97-Jan '98) is a light, floral scent with a warm-hearted body. To try it for yourself, dial 0891 408839 and you could nab one of 15 free bottles of the Eau de Toilette (worth £24.95).

Q: Which LA district, postcode 90210, is another Giorgio scent?

Comp rules, see p41.



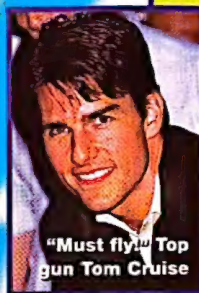
Gossip...

with celeb queen Dawn



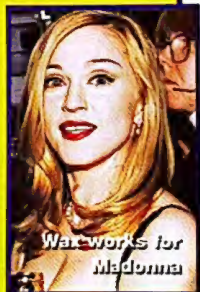
For once, **Naomi Campbell** has been left speechless. While shopping in a crowded Tokyo store, she was confronted by a teenage girl who proceeded to strip naked before asking if she had what it takes to be a model. The bare cheek! ★ **Snoopy Tom Cruise** attended the London premiere of his new movie *Jerry Maguire*, but only stayed a paltry five minutes before sneaking out the back door to meet his wife **Nicole Kidman** for dinner ★ **Noah Wyle's** ego was badly bruised recently, when he was mobbed by fans at an LA studio. Seems they'd mistaken him for *Friends'* **Matthew Perry**.

Oops! ★ Talkin' of *Friends*, **Lisa Kudrow** has informed the show's producers that she's planning for a baby, which means Phoebe may have to become preggers on the show. Wonder who'll be the daddy mack? ★ When **Madonna** feels hairy, she flies in her personal waxer from Miami, who gives the Material Girl a manicure, pedicure and



"Must fly!" Top gun Tom Cruise

facial session. The cost? A snip at \$600 a time! But that's nothing compared with **Demi Moore** and **Bruce Willis**, who splash out nearly \$3,000 a month on bottled mountain water – to bathe in! ★ **Gillian Anderson** has threatened to quit *The X-Files* after discovering that co-star **David Duchovny** gets paid twice as much as her ★ The fight may be back on between **Blur** and **Oasis**, after **Blur's Graham** sharpened up his claws and commented, "Oasis are pretty thick people." Mi-aow! ★ Oi, **Alford**, nooo! London's *Burning* star John has scotched the rumours he'd quit singing by releasing a new single ★ **Spotted: Chris Evans** and **Jamie Theakston** shopping at Tesco in London's Portobello Road, **Noel Gallagher** at an Ash gig, and **The Artist Formerly Known as Prince** at a swank London club.



Warworks for Madonna

What a week was written to the sounds of ABBA's *Greatest Hits*, the *Romeo And Juliet* film soundtrack, Fatboy Slim's *Better Living Through Chemistry*, 18 Wheeler's *Year Zero* and Ant & Dec's *Shout*.

Just Seventeen ★ 5

Word up! No 47

Hat-stand (adjective)

Origin: When Pet Shop Boy Neil Tennant was a music journo, he invented the term to describe loony pop stars.

Definition: It's another way of saying, 'Stark raving mad'.

Usage: "Seen 'Enders recently? Joe Wicks has stopped taking his pills and gone completely hat-stand."

Sizzling!

The new look J17

It's boss – and you better believe it!

Absent parents

It's time to party when your folks hit the holiday trail

Max Monroe: Loose Cannon

Mullets aho! The Michael Bolton of T...

Little black dresses

You'll feel undressed without one

Having a houseful on Saturday night

Why go out when you can bring your mates to you?

Butterflies in your hair

Fluttery hairclips: the way forward

Burglars

Why can't you get your CDs from HMV like everyone else?

Cancelling footie matches

B-movies or boot boys? No competition

Windy weather

Oh, just blow away!

Tidying-up after parties

All that housework could drive you insane

Sunday TV

Apart from 'Enders and Ant & Dec

Unzipped, there's nowt on

Messy eyebrows

If they look like you've taken the

hedge trimmers to 'em, you've

plucked too much



Foam alone

Thought supermarket bathroom products were dull? Think again, 'cause Tesco have come clean with these brilliant two-tone bath oils (£2). Too good to leave on the shelf!

Everyone knows parents can be embarrassing – it's the law. But you

Cooler Shaker

For Janine, 15, and Sean, 17, the problems start when he hits the dancefloor...

Janine

"I had no idea how embarrassing Sean could be 'til one night The Prodigy's *Firestarter* video was on TV. Suddenly, Sean leapt up and started dancing. I couldn't believe it! He was waving his hands all over the place, spinning his head round and wiggling his bum. He reckoned he was the spit of Keith Prodigy, but he actually looked like a complete div."

I told him his dancing was an embarrassment but he didn't believe me. Now he dances like that all the time. Maybe he does it to get attention, but why would anyone want to be noticed for being a terrible dancer?

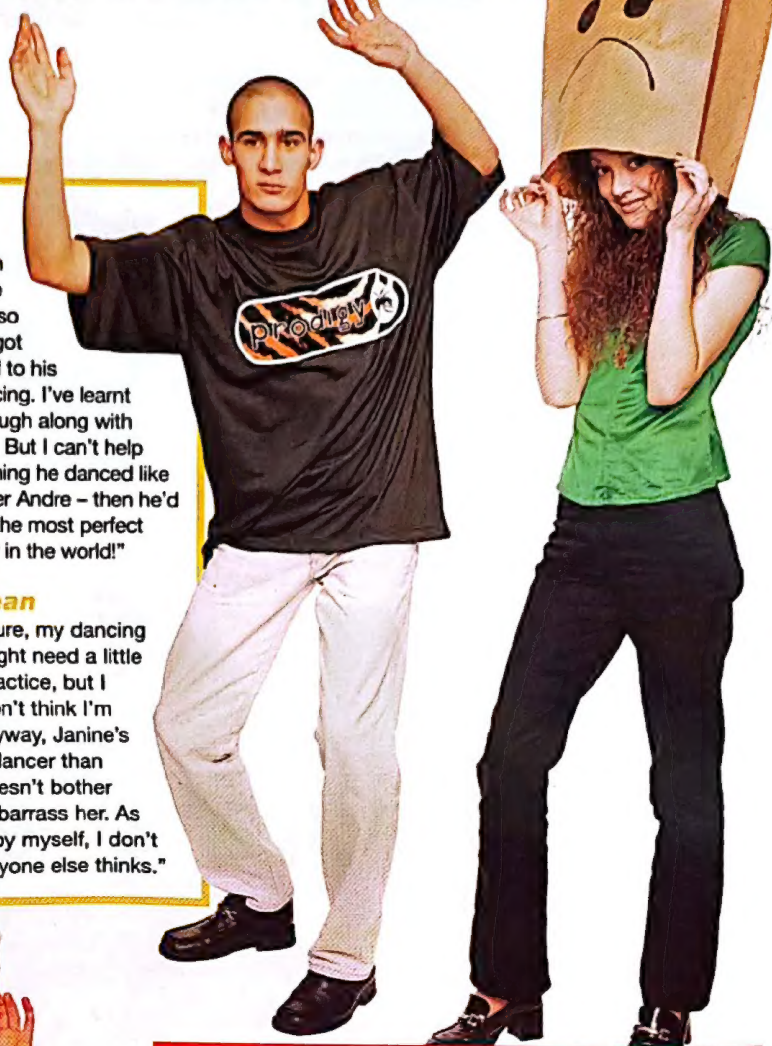


I've been going out with Sean for three months now, so

I've got used to his dancing. I've learnt to laugh along with him. But I can't help wishing he danced like Peter Andre – then he'd be the most perfect guy in the world!"

Sean

"Sure, my dancing might need a little practice, but I don't think I'm that bad. Anyway, Janine's a far worse dancer than me and it doesn't bother me that I embarrass her. As long as I enjoy myself, I don't care what anyone else thinks."



Loud 'n' proud

Jemma, 16, is powerless to prevent Marc, 17, pumping up the volume...

Jemma

"Marc is the loudest person in the world. When we go to the cinema, he thinks he's whispering in my ear. But he's so noisy, people in the rows behind us ask him to shut up! The worst thing he ever did was asking me on a packed bus, in a very loud voice, if I'd remembered to get some constipation medicine. Everyone on the bus started sniggering. I went bright red. After that, Marc began to realise how embarrassing his loudness can be. So now, when he senses I'm getting annoyed, he shuts

up. It's such a relief!

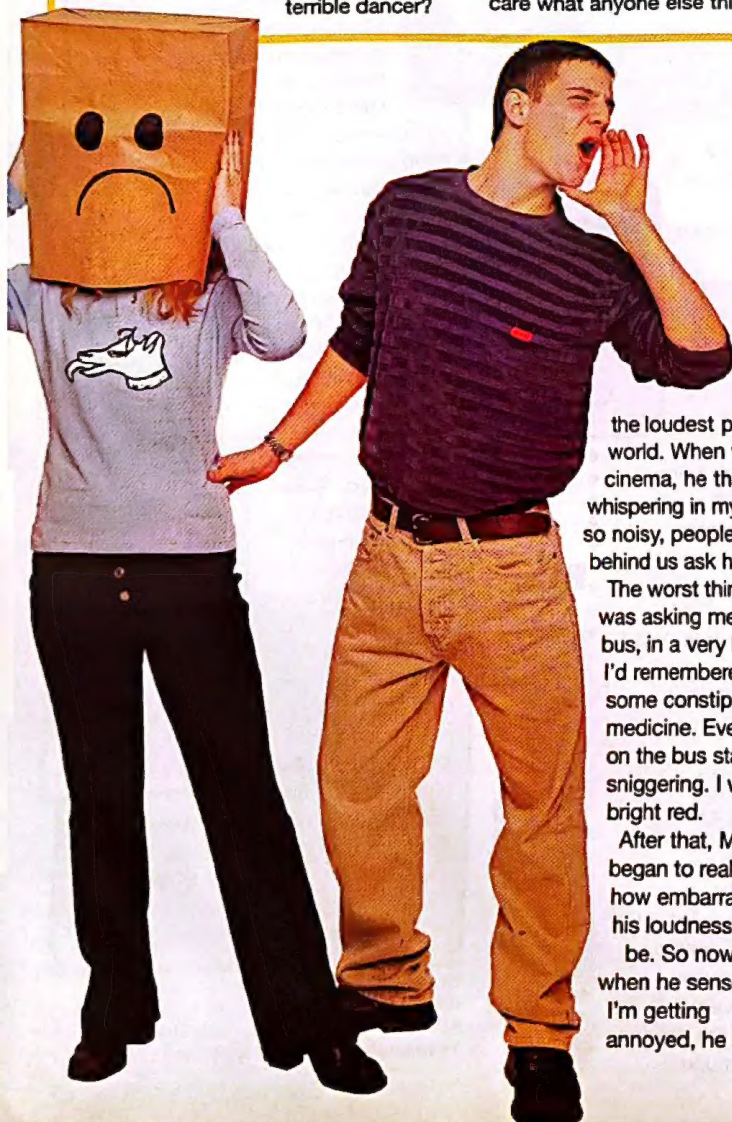
Despite everything, I really like Marc and can see us being together for a long time. He's really cute and is always telling his mates how much he loves me. And, even though my mates think he's too embarrassing to go out with, I reckon they're just jealous."

Marc

"I like being loud – it's amusing. Life would be very boring if I was quiet all the time. I know Jemma gets embarrassed, but she does usually see the funny side – at least I hope she does!"



Red



boyfriend? Meet four cringe kings and their long-suffering lasses...

Mad fer it

Lisa, 15, has a sneaking suspicion Paul H, 17, may be beyond help...

Lisa

"Paul's just plain weird. When I first met him he was wearing a super-bright Hawaiian shirt and had massive, fat dreadlocks. He'd even dyed his eyebrows orange to match his shirt. I thought he must be a nutter, but when we started talking he was really funny and I fancied him like mad.

He's not like anyone else I know. When we're out together he sings, jumps around and

generally behaves like a lunatic. Once, I was out shopping with my mate and Paul's antics got so embarrassing we ran away from him!

My friends thought I'd completely lost it when I first started seeing Paul. But now they know him, they think he's OK.

Paul will never try to fit in with the crowd just to be 'cool', 'cause he's not that dull. He's a one-off, and deep-down I love him for it."

Paul H

"I suppose I am quite different, and I know it can embarrass Lisa. But at least she won't ever get bored with me. I do what I do and wear what I wear. If that makes me weird, who cares?"



Wonderwailer

Christina, 16, can't stop cringing when Paul T, 17, starts to croon...

Christina

"Whenever Paul and I go anywhere where music is playing, he'll burst into song. Not long after we'd started seeing each other, we went shopping and he started singing *Wannabe* by the Spice Girls out loud. He was even trying to dance like them. Another time we were at a bus stop when he started singing *Cecilia*, by Suggs. But he changed the words to Christina. I just totally cringed.

He really belts them out, but his voice is terrible and everyone can hear him. It's a total nightmare. If I pretend I'm not with him he'll just follow me around and sing even louder than before.

On Valentine's Day we were in a really nice restaurant, but as soon as a slushy record came on he just had to sing along. He

thought he was being romantic, but it was really embarrassing and he almost deafened me.

My mates think it's completely hysterical, but that's 'cause they don't have to go out with him. Paul and I have been together for about a year now, and I've learnt to take him to the pub as much as possible. The noise of other people talking and singing drowns out his voice.

Still, I love him too much to dump him because of his terrible singing. I just have to thank my lucky stars he's not a trainspotter - that would be even more embarrassing."

Paul T

"OK, I confess. I'm pretty much tone-deaf so my singing is appalling. I know it embarrasses Christina but I can't help singing along to things. I'm just a born attention-seeker. My friends are always complaining about it and I know it annoys Christina, but I just can't stop!"



cheek day

Tuesday's lad is full of grace
Peter Scarf (Liam Tanner)

Age 17

Where to catch him Hangin' out in Sydney where he lives with his parents and his brother and sister.

Romantic status According to our spies, Pete's unattached and goes for girls with pearly-white teeth.

Home & Away japes Liam and Casey touch tongues, but decide to stay pals.

Why he brings sunshine into our lives Perfect boyfriend material – shy, honest, approachable and gorge.

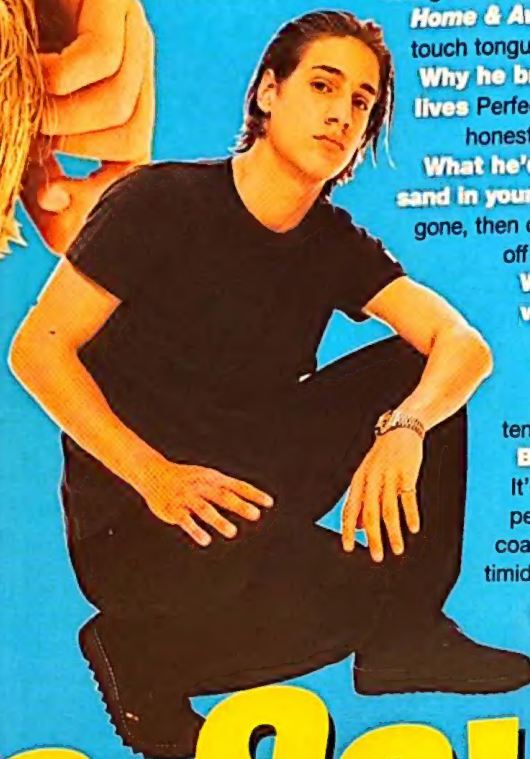
What he'd do if someone kicked sand in your face Wait until the bully's gone, then dust you down and cart you off to recover over a smoothie.

When he's not catching waves Peter's an absolute

'70s freak – his favourite album's *Saturday Night Fever*! He's also mad on tennis, footie and basketball.

Beach undressing style It'd take you three weeks to persuade him to peel off his coat, we reckon. And being a timid type, he'd probably have

17 pairs of shorts under his strides!



The Severn

Monday's lad is fair of face

Jesse Spencer (Billy Kennedy)

Age 18

Where to catch him Big Jesse's a busy lad, whizzing between the *Neighbours* set and his college studies.

Neighbours japes Is pirate radio DJ Billy being two-timed by Melissa?

Why he brings sunshine into our lives Wake up! In the Billy-Toadfish partnership, he's the looker, innie?

Romantic status He claims not to have time for a girlfriend at the mo, but with looks like that, it won't be long.

What he'd do if someone kicked sand in your face Being the perfect gent, Jesse would probably have a go.

When he's not catching waves He's thumping the tubs (that's playing drums) in his band, Splayd.

Beach undressing style Jesse would probably blush like a raspberry, then whip off his keks as quickly as poss.



J17 has dreamed up its own magnificent seven. Yep, that's one Aussie soap sizzler for each day of the week. Who's your dish of the day?

Wednesday's lad is full of woe

Todd MacDonald (Darren Stark)

Age 23

Where to catch him In Melbourne, like most of the *Neighbours* cast.

Romantic status Well, he lives with Tasma Walton – star of another Oz soap, *Blue Heelers* – but claims they're just good friends.

Neighbours japes Darren eventually gets out of the slammer. But will Libby let him into her life?

Why he brings sunshine into our lives He's a bad boy! Add his mane of brown hair and that wicked glint in his eyes and... fwoar!

What he'd do if someone kicked sand in your face He'd have a word with his old prison pals and get them to pay a 'visit'.

When he's not catching waves Todd claims he spends all his spare time learning his lines. But you know what happens when your life's all work and no play, dontcha?

Beach undressing style Being the tuff lad he is, Todd wouldn't get his kit off unless he wanted to. And once he'd agreed to reveal all, chances are he'd just peel 'em off without any ceremony.





Thursday's lad has far to go

Nic Testoni (Travis Nash)

Age 25

Where to catch him He lives in Sydney, but loves the great outdoors – try 'the bush'.

Romantic status Tragic but true, Nic's head-over-heels. But she's a woah-oh-oh, mysterious girl, 'cause he's staying schtum.

Home & Away japes Both Travis and Kelly hear the sound of bells. But Travis' are wedding bells and Kelly's ones of alarm.

Why he brings sunshine into our lives He's *Home & Away*'s favourite hippy. But that wispy goatee-ette has got to go.

What he'd do if someone kicked sand in your face He'd give 'em an ear-bashing, but stay cool. Like, violence is so unkarmic.

When he's not catching waves Shock horror – Nic's terrible at surfing! You'll find him scoffing in a Chinese restaurant instead.

Beach undressing style An ex-model, Nic would saunter along, locks a-flowing, hips a-swinging, removing an item at a time.



twoarfs



Saturday's lad works hard for a living

Ben Unwin (Jesse McGregor)

Age 19

Where to catch him He lives at home in Sydney with his doctor dad and fitness trainer mum.

Romantic status He won't reveal a thing about his love life – which probably means he has a secret long-term lay-dee.

Home & Away japes Jesse's juggling work with looking after his daughter and going out with Selena. Can he cope?

Why he brings sunshine into our lives His character Jesse is a rogue with a heart of gold. Ben claims he and Jesse have "a lot in common. I haven't stolen a car, though."

What he'd do if someone kicked sand in your face It'd be payback time. Ben would wait until the bully went for a dip, then dump his clothes in the water.

When he's not catching waves Ben plays guitar in a band called Ethedon, whatever that is.

Beach undressing style He'd maintain eye contact, while casually letting his clothes drop to the ground.



Friday's lad is loving and giving

Anthony Engelman (Stonefish)

Age 22

Where to catch him Hanging out in Melbourne with friends and family.

Romantic status

Ant has a "trusting and understanding" relationship with his girl, Helen. Aww.

Neighbours japes

Poor old Stonie gets the boot from Catherine and feels it's time for a life change. What's he going to do?

Why he brings sunshine into our lives He's Erinsborough's fave rogue.

What he'd do if someone kicked sand in your face Kick some sand back in the bloke's face. Then run off, giggling.

When he's not catching waves You'll find Ant filling his face with his mum's cooking. His best mate Jason's a chef, too.

Better watch that waistline, Stonie!

Beach undressing style He'd probably whip 'em off without a thought. While playing cricket with the local kids once, a couple of them thought it would be a wheeze to pull down his shorts! Our Ant wasn't embarrassed, though.



And the lad that is born on the seventh day is saucy, sexy, hip and we-hey!

Benji Kirkland(!) McNair (Malcolm Kennedy)

Age 22

Where to catch him He shares a house in Melbourne with four pals and, er, three goats.

Romantic status He's single! But he has a good idea of his ideal babe:

"She's got to be able to laugh at herself and take responsibility for her actions."

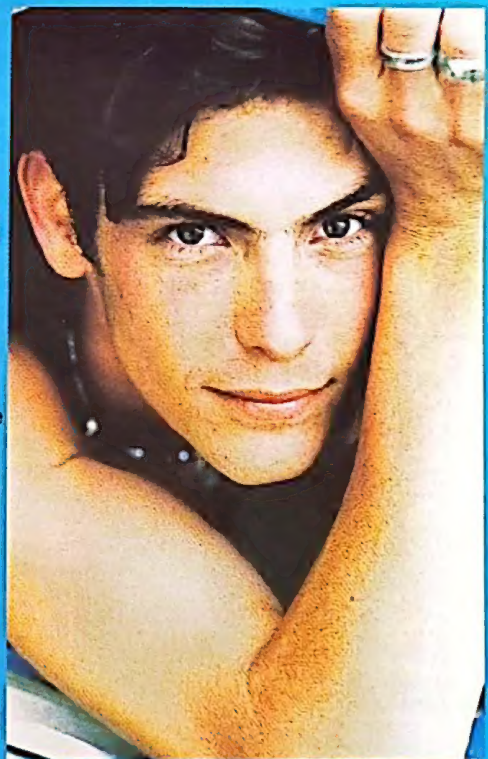
Neighbours japes Mal and his dad aren't seeing eye-to-eye. And the tension gets worse when the two come to blows at a lawnmowing gig!

Why he brings sunshine into our lives Benji loves snogging, having started at 13. "I was in the back row of the cinema with a girl and she just leaned over and kissed me! For about eight seconds, I was totally stunned!"

What he'd do if someone kicked sand in your face He'd approach the kicker and try giving him a hard time. Benji's touch of nerdiness wouldn't give him a fighting chance if it came to water pistols at dawn, though.

When he's not catching waves Benji is learning to play the guitar, but reports of a *Neighbours* band are, as yet, unfounded.

Beach undressing style After prancing around a bit, you'd get a few flashes of his tanned torso before he got down to the nitty-gritty!



by Camilla

mail

bonding



Welcome to the J17 letters-fest, the post with the most! Write to me, Camilla, c/o Mail bonding, PO Box 417, London WC2H 7TW. Best bonder gets a bag of goodies!

Star Letter

Brave hearts

Congratulations to Spencer, James, Alex and Darren from 'Who you callin' soft?' (26 Feb). I think their hobbies are ace, not 'girly' (whatever that means). Taking up things like dancing or cooking which aren't so traditional for boys just proves how cool they are. As for the people who insult or laugh at them, well, how sad is that?



M Evans, Wales

● Yeah, M, I'm right with you on this. Given the choice of a lad who could create me a culinary delight, or one who's good at charging round a muddy rugby pitch (and expects me to watch), I know which I'd rather have...

Spice as nice

Hey, French and Saunders, Lulu and co! So ya reckon you're the best wannabe Spices around? Well, we've got news for you! Not only are we the spitting image of Geri and the gang



Spices Mk 2: (left to right) Baby, Scary, Ginger, Posh and Sporty

(well, in our dreams...), but we're best mates too! Beat that! **Caroline, Debbie, Jenny, Helen and Jessica, Romford**
● Hmm, not bad, Romford ravers, but I've spotted one flaw in your take-over bid: your Posh's teetering on the brink of a smile. Easy V would never dream of doing such a thing - It might spoil her lippy!

Cause for applause

Top gossip and laughs are always guaranteed in J17, but thanks very much for the feature 'My mum can't stop shaking' (26 Feb) about the girl whose mum has Parkinson's Disease. It really made me stop and think. Jackie's done so well, refusing to be embarrassed when people stare, and giving her mum total support.

Emma Bates, Farnborough

● This story was certainly a sobering one. As you say, Jackie's clearly a star, as is her mum - and it sounds as if

their whole family's being amazingly brave in the face of such a devastating illness. Respect to all of them.



Mad fer Martians

I've just been to see *Mars Attacks!*, and I'm overwhelmed by the utter grooviness of it



all. What a film! (And the doughnut-boy character's quite tasty too, in a sort of sensitive-River-Phoenix-type style.) I think I'm going to cover myself in green slime and communicate in Martian from now on. **Ack ack ack ack ack!**

A nitrogen chewy tab, Ayr

● Yep, *Mars Attacks!* is a top film and no mistake, chewy one. And that's despite the fact it features Tom Jones, as himself - a far, far scarier prospect than any alien, to my mind.

Sticker bickers

There was me, feeling mightily chuffed with my freebie stickers. Then I came across the 'Kylie wears my cast offs' one. Well, excuse me! Being a Kylie myself I've had to endure loads of sarky comments and sniggering, but now J17's telling everyone I wear other people's left-overs! I think I'm owed an apology.

Kylie Murray, Bristol

● Kyles, dahling, haven't you heard? Charity-shop clobber is the last word in chic. No? Oh, well, alright then. Accept our humblest apologies. Grovel, grovel. Are we forgiven?



More hot mail rocks:

Geri's Union Jack dress - triumph or disaster? ★ We love Carla Lane ★ Why no Scots in the footie totty cup? ★ Crime Traveller's cool

Life sucks! by Polly Dunbar



"I brought along your ex to save us comparing notes!"

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He may sound like a character from a steamy Jilly Cooper novel, but Rider Strong's the lad making us swoon in *Boy Meets World*...

Is that name for real?

"Sure, My parents were hippies and wouldn't even let us watch TV 'cause they didn't want us to become commercial addicts. Rider's an old-fashioned name for a mounted knight, and my brother Shiloh is named after a battleground in the American Civil War. My dad gets the most stick, though. His name's Ken Arthur Strong, so everyone calls him King Arthur!"

What's it like being your own production?

"It's cool now, but it was real hectic at first. I was thrust into stuff I'd never done before, like doing my own laundry and paying bills. I wish you got taught that kinda thing at school."

So are you a slacker in the kitchen?

"No way! I'm the worst. I survive on microwave pizza and macaroni cheese. I hate to think what'd happen if my microwave broke - I'd probably starve."

How would you describe yourself as an actor?

"Not really. But I'd love to play a complete psycho. I auditioned for the deranged character in *The Good Son*, but Macaulay Culkin got it. Most of the parts you get as a young actor are so wholesome. It'd be much more interesting to play someone who's totally nuts."

What's the oddest thing you've ever done?

"I did a bungee jump once. I was so nervous, I couldn't stop talking. I didn't think I'd be able to go through with it, but the guy counted to three and the next thing I knew I was flying through the air. It was so amazing, I did it again straight afterwards. I wanna try sky-diving next."

Comin' on Strong

You've dated a girl with actress Rachel McAdams. How appears in *Northanger Abbey* (the eighteenth-century romance novel) for about a year. How did you meet?

"I saw a picture of her in a magazine and thought she was the most beautiful girl I'd ever seen. At the time I kept a list of my top ten most beautiful women and she went straight to No 1, above Michelle Pfeiffer. I never thought I'd get to meet her, but she came to see the show and I loved everything about her. She was so down-to-earth - nothing like the usual superficial LA types you meet. I just fell in love."

So will you be able to stroll down the aisle together?

"We're both only 17, so I don't wanna start thinking about that yet. And if I decide too early that she's the one I wanna spend the rest of my life with, it might mess up the whole relationship."

What was your first film as a director?

"When I was little, my brother and I got hold of a camcorder and made our own movie. We were superheroes who went round saving toys from a villain called The Great Toy Keeper. It wasn't bad, but it ain't gonna get me any Oscars."

How does being famous?

"No. What little taste of fame I've had, I hate. But it's strange 'cause I'm kinda addicted. I know I'm always gonna want more and more. Weird, huh?"

How does it feel like being on Oprah must have been?

"I felt honoured to be asked on to her show, but I regretted it in the end. I was invited on 'cause the show was gonna

be about fan mail and I was getting about 2,000 fan letters a week. But Oprah spent the whole time talking to the girls in the audience about why they fancied me, and she kept asking me about my looks. I even had to read out some of my fan mail. It sounded so superficial, it was embarrassing. I hate being treated like a piece of meat."

What about being in *Party Of Five*?

"That was real weird. I played Claudia's boyfriend for a couple of episodes, but she looks like she's about 12, so I looked miles older and bigger than her. They tried to make me look younger by parting my hair and putting me in kids' clothes, but it didn't work. When I had to do a kissing scene with her, it was very odd. I felt like a child molester!"

Was your first screen kiss any better?

"No, it was terrible. I had to kiss an extra, and the first time I met her was about two seconds before I had to snog her. I was completely unprepared - it was a nightmare. Still, stage kisses aren't a big deal for me any more. I've had so many screen girlfriends, I'm becoming a bit of an expert!"

What's your most embarrassing moment?

"I had to do a kissing scene with someone the first night I met her, so that kinda thing doesn't phase her. Anyway, she gets to perform screen kisses with some really good-looking guys, so she can't complain!"

The inside info on *Boy Meets World*

What's the deal?

Rider plays Shawn Hunter, a boy with a 'heart of gold' who's been abandoned by his parents and has a tendency to date unsuitable girls.

Who are the other kids on the show?

The main peeps are Shawn's best mate Cory, Cory's squeeze Topanga and his slacker bro Eric.

Are they all enjoying the experience?

Well, Ben Savage (who plays Cory) is off to a good start. His real-life big bro is none other than Fred Savage, the vertically-challenged main boy in *The Wonder Years*. Danielle Fishel (Topanga) looks set for more success - she's already started writing for an American mag and developing a workout video, called *Funkarate*. And as for the swoonsome Will Friedle (Eric), he's preparing himself for a career in archaeology. Hmmm.

● Catch *Boy Meets World* at 6.30pm Mon - Thurs on The Disney Channel.



Top belly totty: the *Boy Meets World* crew



**You didn't expect to get away without
a picture of our can did you?**

Fancy a bit of total adoration? No problem. J17 advice ques

Let's face it – none of us is perfect. We all drop the odd clanger or have embarrassing habits. Usually we're sensible enough to make sure the truth never gets out, but getting a new boyfriend sometimes brings on an acute case of verbal diarrhoea.

All those weeks of acting cool, being hip and looking like the kind of girl Peter Andre would croon about are forgotten when he meets the 'real' you. The one who scratches her bum, wears the same pants three days in a row and keeps half-eaten Lion bars under her bed.

There's nothing wrong with letting a new fella see the more 'natural' aspects of your personality, but if you don't want him bolting for the door after your first date, take J17's advice – don't reveal all your secrets to him at once. Or else you might end up like these five readers...

Your ancient history

"I think I've finally spotted where I'm going wrong. I spend the whole of the first date talking about my ex-boyfriends – how I met them, what went wrong, how I begged them to take me back and how broken-hearted I was. I make myself look like a total fool when all I want is for my new bloke to understand me and be impressed." **Susie, 14**

Magical m

Revealing all your ex-files to a new lad is a bit like showing him your holiday snaps – he wasn't there, so it's boring. Also, he may take a look at yer fingers to see if they're burnt from all the torches you're holding. Lads aren't riveted by tales of how romantic/lush/hilarious your last fella was. Just forget about 'em, girlfriend. As soon as you start delving into your database of past passions, your new spunk will probably start watching the telly over your shoulder or plotting his way out of your life.

Mystery is Keeping some secrets ★ Being yourself ★ Living in the present
★ Knowing when to stop talking ★ Allowing him to have his fun
Mystery isn't Telling lies ★ Being whoever you think he wants you to be
★ Being disgusting as a party piece ★ Talking 'til you're bored

Anita reveals how to make him wanna get close to you...

Your evil deeds

"My boyfriend and I had a fight about where I'd been one night. I'd actually been at a mate's house, but he kept on and on at me. He said someone had seen me out with a boy from school. I kept trying to convince him I was telling the truth, but he wasn't having any of it. Finally, I said, 'Why do you think I'm a liar?' And he replied, 'Because you told me you were.' I'd forgotten about the time I'd confessed all about my two-timing history." *Kelly, 15*

Another excellent reason to refrain from recounting your complete relationship history to him is that some lads have memories like elephants. They may not remember your birthday, the exact moment they met you or even your name, but they'll always remember how you treated the last poor lad who asked you out. It might seem like a cracking good yarn at the time, but blimey, could you regret it later!

Your saucy CV

"I used to think my boyfriend was really moody. He'd get into strops for no reason and refuse to talk to me. One day I got so fed up, I made him tell me what was wrong. He replied that he was sick of me going on about who I'd got off with." *Mags, 15*

Acting like you've been to Snogs 'R' Us for your hols isn't going to put a new boyfriend at his ease. There's no need to go into all the dancin' 'n' romancin' you and your ex did together. If you're that eager for your new fella to

horns with your ex in a way that'd have David Attenborough sprinting for his camera.

Your 'orrible habits

"I've always been into picking my boyfriend's spots. I know it's nasty but I love it. My first boyfriend used to let me, so I thought nothing of it, but then I grossed out this lad I really liked. A load of us were sunbathing in the park when I saw a spot on this boy's back and said I'd love to zap it. He freaked totally and never looked at me again!" *Vicci, 16*

The trick is to ease a boyfriend into these things slowly. Offering your new beau a gherkin-and-lemon-curd sarnie on your first date won't win you any points for good taste and sophistication. But a few weeks down the line, when he's got to know you better... bingo! He'll think it's sweet and eccentric, and love you for it.

most of the population. Most mums suffer from 'Have-some-more-to-eat' syndrome and love to drag out those gruesome photo albums of



Mystery lure

know how experienced you are, just tell him. But if you insist on going into detail about your last fella's tonsil talents, you can bet one of three things will happen: ★ A spot of heavy jealousy will emerge. Your lad'll be intimidated by your minx-like ways and your ex's studliness, leading to mucho arguing. ★ He'll also feel the need to go into his past, making you feel insecure and unhappy. ★ One-upmanship is so important to boys that your lad will get all territorial and want to lock

Revealing all your kooky habits to a new lad straight away will have him running for the door. Funny little quirks are only cute once you get to know someone. A friend of mine once had a boyfriend who had a habit of chewing his toenails. Endearing? No, not exactly. Big turn-off? Most definitely! But the lad was sensible enough to keep this toe-related talent to himself until she loved him for a few hundred other things.

The fact is, we all have annoying – and sometimes disgusting – habits.

Your freaky family

"My mum's pretty weird and my boyfriends find it off-putting. It's partly my fault – I tell all these stories about her. Like she tap-dances when she cooks, or goes to the shops in her slippers. I think they'll think it's funny, but they just look worried." *Lisa, 15*

If your relations are more *The Addams Family* than *The Waltons*, don't worry – you're exactly like

you as a dribbling baby. And most dads are obsessed with golf, football, greenfly or all three.

All this can be mind-boggling to a new beau, and you can make the situation much worse by recounting embarrassing stories about your folks before he's met them. He'll refuse to meet them, and they'll get suspicious of this mystery man.

Save yourself the angst – don't forewarn him. Invite him round, act like everything is normal and don't, whatever you do, tell him about the time your dad made your ex mow the lawn before he could go out with you.

Don't ★ Being selective ★ Not grilling him on his past ★ Being disgusting in private
his secrets ★ Not being ashamed about who you are

Do ★ Living in the past ★ Spilling all the beans ★ Twisting his arm until he tells you
se your voice ★ Stalking him when he's out without you ★ Pretending you're perfect

Boy talk

All lads love their mams – just ask Liam and Noel. But do they really want girlfriends who are just like their ma?

One of the oddest relationships a boy can have is with his mum. She's the source of all wisdom. Sadly however, as we get older, she can also be the source of much embarrassment.

Ask the Gallaghers who their greatest hero is and it sure won't be a Beatle. No prizes for guessing that mum Peggy's had to put up with a lot of Manc mouth in her time, though.

But the lad-mum bond extends to much more than the odd clip round the ear or bag of dirty washing...

The thing about our mam is she's the best person in the world for making us feel daft. Of course, she's also the best at making us feel clever, but we tend to forget about that. All we know is that, despite Dad's delusions, Mum's in charge.

This should mean we try to act mature in front of her. But for some reason, the moment Mum utters anything sounding remotely like a command, we revert to surly apemen, bottom lips dragging on the floor.

Mummy's boys

It's even worse if she says something nice. She says, 'Your hair suits you like that'. We hear, 'Get to the barber's and shave your head to spite me.' Worst of all is when she laughs, 'Ooh, I think she's got a crush on you,' whenever someone we really like walks past in Woolies. In our infinite wisdom, we'd rather cause a scene than ask Mum for advice. Instead, we turn to Dad, who gets even more embarrassed than us and gives us a fiver to buy some chips.

But no matter how much masculine

mystique (yeah, right) we try to cultivate, all lads know Mum knows best. She knows what we're thinking before we think it and understands our life better than we do. So in an effort to seem independent, lads shy away from their ma during their teens. Mums get their revenge later on, though, when they repeat advice that they know we realise was right first time. Pah.

Meeting his ma

The thing to remember about meeting a boy's mum for the first time is that she possesses unearthly

mum-pleasing race. But remember it's a marathon, not a sprint. Going all out to make our mums fall for you just gives her the impression you're devious. Or dippy. It's best just to be yourself.

The acid test in the mother-girlfriend meeting stakes is the baby photos. Once she wheels out cringeworthy snaps of your beau rolling around naked on the carpet, you've definitely been welcomed into the maternal fold. Which also leaves your lad with nothing to do but sit in the corner, looking aggrieved. If the convo flags during your first face-to-face with Mum, remember the baby pics gambit.

"The acid test in the mother-girlfriend meeting stakes is the baby pics"

powers of divination. These determine whether or not she'll like you, regardless of anything you do or say.

Like, we'll take a lass back to the homestead, admiring her sensible dress, easiness on the slap and willingness to help with the washing-up, only for Mater to proffer the thinly-veiled attack of, 'Yes, she's fine.' This can mean anything from, 'I don't want to hurt your feelings by saying I hate her', to 'I'll wait until she chucks you before telling you what I really think.' Or we'll shudder at the thought of introducing a girl we think is too loud/individual/posh, only to be totally pushed out of the conversation within ten minutes.

There are ways of giving yourself a head start in the

Settling sons

A common myth about lads is that we're all looking for a woman who reminds us of our mum. Not true. What we want is someone who behaves like

Mum. Someone to mollycoddle us, do the boring chores and soothe us if we cut our finger. But we also want them to fancy us, like all our favourite things, agree with everything we say and look like Drew Barrymore – which is totally and utterly not like Mum. See, Mum is our first female role model. So we grow up with out-of-proportion expectations of the female gender. This doesn't mean all blokes grow up believing that all women act like Wilma Flintstone, packing us off bowling while they get the tea on.

But it does mean that boys often expect superhuman levels of patience, understanding and sympathy.

Forgive us, for it's a cruel awakening when we eventually realise that our mams are like that because it's their job and not because we deserve it. Doh!

Mum's the word

5 fantasy mums...

- ★ **Diane's mum from Trainspotting** She's dead cool when Di's lad stays over (it was the very lush Ewan, though)
- ★ **The Oxe woman** For her tasty casseroles and gorgeous gravy
- ★ **Jane Asher** For her cakes 'n' buns
- ★ **Carol Vorderman from Countdown** She'd do our Maths homework for us
- ★ **Lily Savage** Except she's really a bloke. Doh!

...and 5 nightmare mums

- ★ **Jill Dando from Holiday** Too busy jetting off on free hols to cook our tea
- ★ **Pauline Fowler** That card! That whingeing voice! Give us young 'n' funky 'Chelle Fowler any day.
- ★ **Kathleen Turner in Serial Mom** She'd murder all our mates. Obviously.
- ★ **Cilla Black** She'd be trying to send us on a blind date with the vicar's daughter. Noooo!
- ★ **Anne Robinson from Watchdog** She'd pour bleach on our clothes to test 'em, then set fire to our duvet in a consumer trial





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The ones that cost loads and cover hardly anything.

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That, if your sister borrowed, would make you seriously consider murder.

(And if your brother borrowed, suicide.)

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You don't need the perfect boobs, the flattest tummy or the longest legs to look terrific in a dress like this.

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With all of this self-confidence you may decide to discard your underwear completely.

That's fine.

It's just probably best not to mention that bit to your dad.

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Over the next 5 pages, we bring you 4 amazing true experiences



Just Seventeen

Tons of toe-curling confessions every week

"We've

Cancer, particularly leukaemia, can affect young people. But **it isn't the end of the world,** as these two survivors testify...

When Stephanie Gray (below) was 13, she was given just three days to live. Now she helps others recover from cancer...

"Id always been a tomboy, and loved playing rugby at home in Neath, South Wales, so when I suddenly started getting sick, Mum was really worried. It was November '95 when I first suffered headaches and dizzy spells. Then I developed bruises and a rash, but the doctors thought it was just a food allergy. Then one evening I collapsed and was rushed to hospital. Mum was frantic. I'll never forget that day – it was 2 December and I was told I had leukaemia. Until then, I'd

to fall out. At first I wore a cap, but everyone wanted to know what was underneath, so I started walking around bald. A few boys made sarcastic comments, but my mates Natalie and Alana were really protective, and soon people started treating me normally again.

Darkest hour

But the chemotherapy made me feel really ill and in January 1996 I got pneumonia. The doctors didn't know if I'd survive. In fact, they told Mum I might only have three days to

live! When I came round after two days everyone was thrilled.

From then on, I began to get really close to the people in the hospital. One was a girl called Charlotte. She was 22 and had had leukaemia since she was 14. Seeing that she'd pulled through gave me hope.

By November last year I was given the all-clear. We celebrated with a bonfire night party. But I didn't forget the



Stephanie and her mum: beating leukaemia

"I tried to stay cheerful and keep fighting"

thought cancer only happened to other people. It was terrifying.

Positive spirit

The doctors said I'd get through it if I stayed positive. So I tried to stay cheerful and keep fighting.

It was Mum who took it the hardest. One evening I found her crying in her bedroom. 'It's supposed to be me who cries,' I said, giving her a big hug.

I was given chemotherapy straight away and my hair began

kids I'd left behind. I remembered how much Charlotte had helped me and I've been visiting the ward ever since. It helps them to chat to someone who knows what they're going through.

And it's not just the kids who need help. One time, I saw a mum crying because her little girl had lost all her hair. I comforted her and showed her how well my own hair had grown back. Having gone through all this myself, the least I can do is help others with leukaemia."

conquered cancer

TRUE-LIFE TRAUMA

When Ben Markham, 18, (right) from Buckinghamshire, felt sick during his GCSEs, he put it down to nerves...

"Back in the summer of '95, I was revising for my GCSEs and was pretty stressed out. During my exams I started to feel ill and get a few aches and pains. My friends said they felt the same though, so I thought it was just exam pressure.

Dizzy spells

But the week after my exams it got worse. One night my temperature soared and the next morning I was dizzy and drowsy. When a rash broke out all over my body (a sign of meningitis) I was rushed to hospital, where I had a blood transfusion.

The next morning the consultant told me I had leukaemia – cancer of the blood. I was stunned. He explained that I wasn't producing enough red blood cells to carry oxygen around my body or enough

white blood cells to fight infections.

Chemotherapy started two days later and I was in hospital for six weeks. My family and friends were brilliant, and I got hundreds of cards – some from total strangers.

Then I got my exam results. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw eight grade As. I'd only expected a few Bs and Cs.

I needed an intensive course of

was eight, was a perfect match. We always used to argue, but when she realised she could save my life things changed between us. Carly was prepared to go through with the operation, which really touched me.

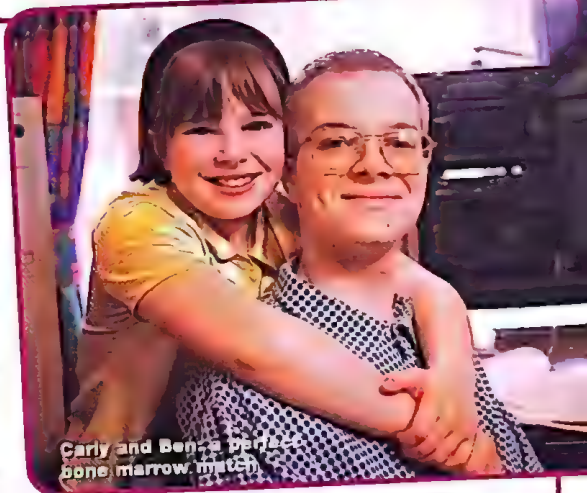
I decided the op would be a last resort because there was a 70 per cent chance I'd

be OK with just chemotherapy.

Over the months, my energy level fell. I'd been a cadet and wanted to join the RAF, but I had to put all that on hold. And the steroids I was on caused my hip joints to deteriorate.

Getting better

I'm still on crutches, but I'm back doing my A-levels, which is great as I was getting really bored. We live



Carly and Ben's perfect bone marrow match

near Paul

Daniels, the magician, and while I was off school he let me do some computer filing work for him. He even taught me a few card tricks!

I should be able to come off all this treatment by the year 2000 – just in time to celebrate the millennium and my 21st birthday! I'm confident I can beat leukaemia. My advice to anyone diagnosed with it is to stay positive. Don't think, 'Oh God, I'm going to die'. Just keep fighting."

"My advice to anyone is to try and be positive"

chemotherapy for a year and then tablets. The only other treatment was to have a bone marrow transplant – if we could find a donor.

Two of my three sisters were old enough to give the samples needed to see if they could donate bone marrow. My middle sister, Carly, who

Baywatch alerted Jill Forbes, 19, (right) to the danger that a mole could be cancerous...

"One Saturday night I was watching *Baywatch*. The guys were really hunky, but the episode focused on lifeguard Stephanie Holden.

As the plot unfolded, I was gripped. Stephanie found a large mole on her leg, went to hospital for tests and found out it was cancerous. I sat there, stunned. I had a mole on my waist exactly the same as

Stephanie's – only bigger. I'd had it for years and it was as big as a penny. Even though it itched I'd never thought

anything of it. I was shaking, terrified that my mole might be cancerous.

Vital visit

That Monday, Mum and I went to the doctor, who said

"I was sure I'd left it too late, and had cancer"

I've have to go to hospital for a check-up. I thought, 'Oh no, it's going to be malignant like



Jill: "Baywatch really is a lifesaver!"

Stephanie's."

The specialist examined the mole and asked if I'd ever used a sunbed. I had. Then he said it would have to be taken out. I was sure I'd left it too late and had cancer.

All clear

The operation was done under local anaesthetic and left a tiny scar. Then they tested the mole and

sent a letter to say I was in the clear. I almost collapsed with relief. Anyone who's worried about a

mole should see their doctor to be on the safe side, especially if it has changed. My favourite *Baywatch* character used to be gorgeous Logan. But now I think Stephanie's the best lifesaver – after all, she may have saved me."

Advice

● Cancer is a serious illness, but it's not always fatal. For help and information booklets, contact CLIC (Cancer and Leukaemia In Childhood), tel: 0117 924 8844.

● And remember, if your mate's ill, don't abandon them – they need you now more than ever.

"Solvents killed my best mate"

Gareth McCarthy, 16, (right) and **Lee House, 17,** were inseparable – 'til solvents tore their friendship apart...

Lee and I first met on my fifth birthday when we went fishing together. We lived in the same area – Whitley in Reading, Berkshire – and became inseparable. We liked similar outdoorsy things.

Lee was a real prankster and once superglued my hand to my face while I was sleeping! But he always looked out for me at school. He didn't have

a steady girlfriend 'cause he preferred hanging out with girls to being tied down. But I'm sure they all fancied him.

On 7 August last year we'd arranged to go camping with friends, but when I called round at Lee's he wasn't in. It

seemed odd 'cause he'd been so keen. We waited 'til 10pm, then left without him. As we set off, an ambulance flew by, lights flashing.

When I got back the next day, my sister told me Lee was in hospital. I rushed round to Lee's and bumped into his little nephew outside. I asked about Lee and he said, 'Lee's dead.' I replied, 'Yeah, very funny!'

with some mates. He'd been in the ambulance that raced past.

I went straight home and put on a tape Lee had recorded for me a few days earlier. It was jungle, his favourite. I broke down in tears.

I couldn't believe he'd done solvents – it was so unlike him. Lee was really into weights and fitness and never messed with drugs.

I remember when a mate once mentioned E and Lee said, 'I don't want to know about that crap!' But I think one of the guys who'd been with Lee had sniffed before and encouraged him to do it.

When I visited Lee in the chapel of rest, he looked so small. All I could think was that it wasn't him in the box. It upset me to see him in there, because death was the only thing he was scared of.

As I walked into his funeral

"It's a total waste of a good lad"



Lee: he won't be forgotten

Drug death

But inside, Lee's family were crying. His mum hugged me and said Lee had died the night before, after sniffing butane gas



"I've got engaged at 14!"

Becky Grimshaw, 14, and **Dean Smith, 15,** (right) reckon they've already found the **love of their lives...**

Becky's story:

I've known Dean for ages 'cause we go to the same school and live close by. But two years ago we started hanging around together, and really hit it off. Whatever worries I had disappeared when I talked them through with Dean, and pretty soon we were living in each other's pockets.

We were walking to school one day when we suddenly realised we were arm in arm. That's when it hit us that we were more than just good friends.

Screen romance

Our love grew and grew after that. One night we were watching a TV movie and the hero told the heroine he wanted to be with her forever and asked her to marry him. That's just how I was feeling about Dean.

So after the film ended I turned to Dean and said, 'I'd like to get engaged so everyone knows how much I love you.' I thought he'd say I was daft, but instead he hugged me and said, 'That's a great idea. I don't care what other people say.' But our mates said we were stupid 'cause we were too young to know our own minds. But we've

"Let's get engaged so everyone knows how much I love you"

both had relationships before, and we knew this was different. Besides, we don't intend to set a wedding date until we've finished school and established our careers. I didn't think Mum would be angry 'cause she met Dad when they

were only 15, but if they were dead set against it we agreed to wait. Neither of us are rebellious – we wanted to be tactful about it.

When I told Mum and Dad they had mixed feelings. Dad was cross and worried, but Mum was brilliant. 'Just don't get hurt,' she said.

We know we're meant to be together, and now we've got the rest of our lives to make it work."

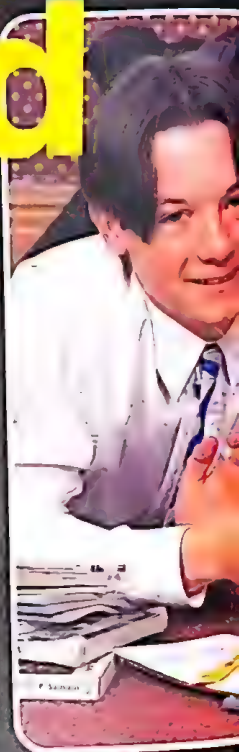
Dean's story:

At first I thought of Becky as just a mate and never imagined she'd want to go out with me. She's so tender, kind and nice, and wouldn't hurt a fly, let alone be bitchy. I can tell her anything and she'll understand.

When we got together our mates took the mickey, saying we were too young to commit ourselves and

miss out on life. But just 'cause we do everything together doesn't mean it's not exciting. Now, a year and a half on, our friends think it's nice we feel so strongly about each other.

The hardest part was telling our parents. If they'd decided to keep us apart to cool our relationship down, there'd have been nothing we could do. We knew they'd be concerned that we just had stars in our eyes, so before telling them we worked out all the



es ★ Reality bites ★ Reality

Service, they were playing UB40's *Red Red Wine* - one of Lee's favourite songs - and I couldn't stop the tears welling up. I felt so cut up. I scraped together enough money for a wreath with 'Forever Friend' written on it in gold and black - his favourite colours

For Gareth, life must go on without his best mate

Wasted life

I still can't believe what happened. Lee had everything going for him - it's a total waste of a good lad. He was my best mate for 12 years and in one night he was gone, never to be seen again.

Like a lot of Lee's friends, I get really angry now if I hear of anyone sniffing stuff. People should get it into their brains that this

WHAT A WASTE

stuff can kill - it took my best mate from me. Bad things happen when you experiment with things you don't understand."

Lee's mum Pat says: "He was a lovely lad. I always warned him not to dabble in drugs, and one silly mistake cost him his life. But if it stops just one more death, I know my Lee won't have died in vain."

Advice

- Sniffing solvents is dicing with death. Lee's inquest found he'd taken about ten butane sniffs. He hallucinated, lashed out aggressively, then collapsed. He died in hospital. The coroner said, "It's a case of: one sniff, you're fine. Next sniff, you're dead."
- For info on solvents or drugs, call the National Drugs Helpline on 0800 776600.

Rings of truth: Becky and Dean



LOVE AGAINST THE ODDS

talking about someone else.

When I eventually told Mum she was so shocked she dropped her tea. 'Be careful,' she said finally. But since then they've seen how devoted we are.

Young love

We've bought each other plain engagement rings because we don't need diamonds to show our commitment. The one I bought cost £15 and I had to save my pocket money for ages.

We plan to have a lot of fun before we get tied down with a family, so we won't miss out. Besides we're legally too young for sex, so there's no rush.

Since we met we've been practically glued together, but we still do stuff on our own. But if Becky goes out with her mates and I go kick boxing, we can't wait to see each other again. And if I'm ever on holiday Becky phones me every day. We intend to be together for the next 70 years, but we've no worries about getting bored."

arguments in advance. We dropped hints first to test the water. Becky asked her mum how old you have to be to get engaged, which attracted a raised eyebrow. And I asked mine what she thought about young people getting serious, but she assumed I was

PETER ANDRE

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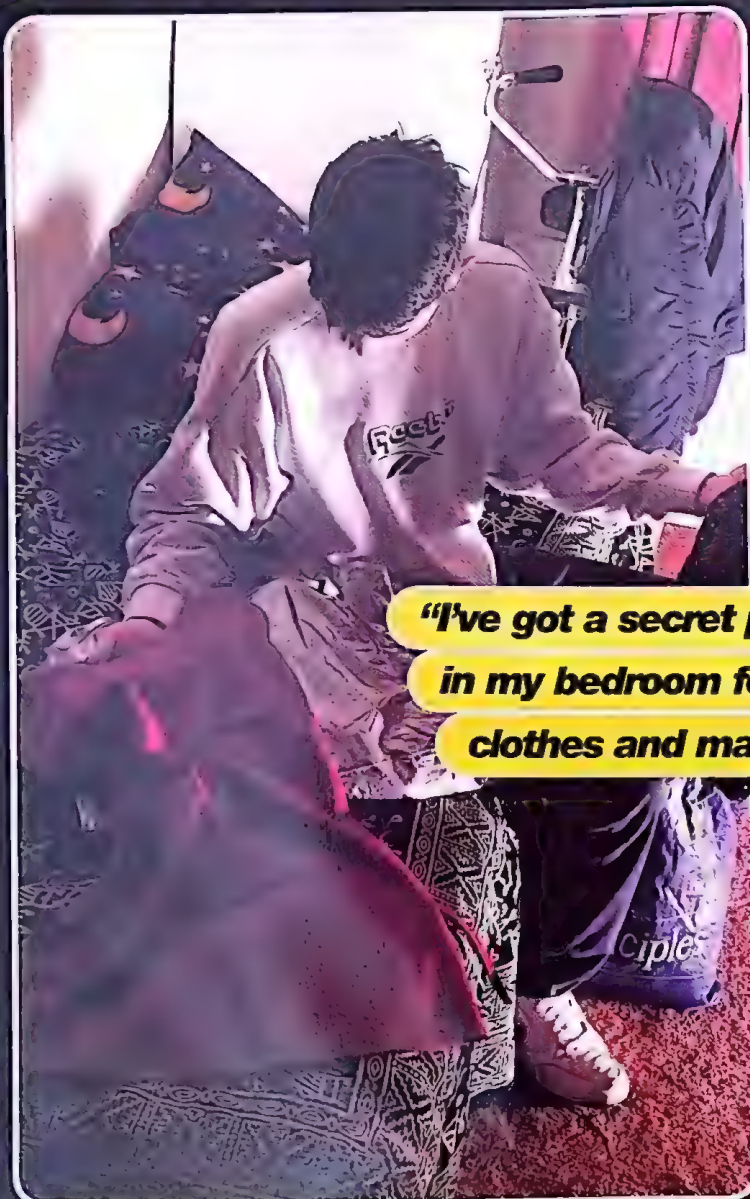
01 BOURNEMOUTH	BIC	11 NEWCASTLE	ARENA
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05 BIRMINGHAM	NBC	13 MANCHESTER	MYNEX
07 GLASGOW	SECC	15 CARDIFF	INTERNATIONAL ARENA
09 ABERDEEN	EXHIBITION & CONF CENTRE	16 WEMBLEY	ARENA

JULY

"I feel like one of the girls"

MY GUILTY SECRET

Mark, 18, feels so in touch with his feminine side, that **he wears girls' clothes...**



"I've got a secret panel in my bedroom for my girls' clothes and make-up"

"By the age of 15, I felt I had more in common with girls than boys. I could talk to them and have a good laugh. Unfortunately, the boys gave me a hard time because I was quiet and never 'one of the lads'.

Trying-on session

Then, one day, I was hanging out alone in my girlfriend Fiona's room while everyone was out. She'd left her clothes lying everywhere. Fiona was a trendy dresser and everything looked good on her, so I suddenly thought, 'Why shouldn't they look good on me, too?'

Before I knew it, I was trying on a short skirt and a pink top. It may sound creepy, but it was more out of a need to get in touch with my femininity. When I looked in the mirror, I felt calmer. Dressing-up in Fiona's clothes was an escape route and I didn't want to take them off. I did a pretty good job of putting on some make-up, too!

I did feel guilty, though. If Fiona had found out, she'd have been upset,

assuming it was a sexual thing. But

I'm not gay, I'm straight – to me, it was just about identifying with girls.

Fiona and I eventually split up, but then I met my current girlfriend Lucy, who's 16. One night, we were going to a fancy dress party and I decided to go as a girl.

Confession time

Lucy lent me clothes and did my make-up. It was then I confessed how much I liked wearing women's stuff. She wasn't shocked and just said, 'Fine,' but I didn't explain how deeply I felt about it. I didn't want her to think less of me as a man.

Recently, Lucy's started letting me wear her clothes, as long as I don't damage them. I buy my own, too. Unfortunately, I'm still living with my parents, so I've got a secret panel in my bedroom where I hide my girl's wardrobe and make-up. I really feel I'm in touch with my feminine side.

Spice boy

I'm really into Girl Power. I love the Spice Girls, particularly Emma because her clothes are the most feminine. Sometimes I like the look of a girl's wardrobe even if I don't think much of the girl herself!

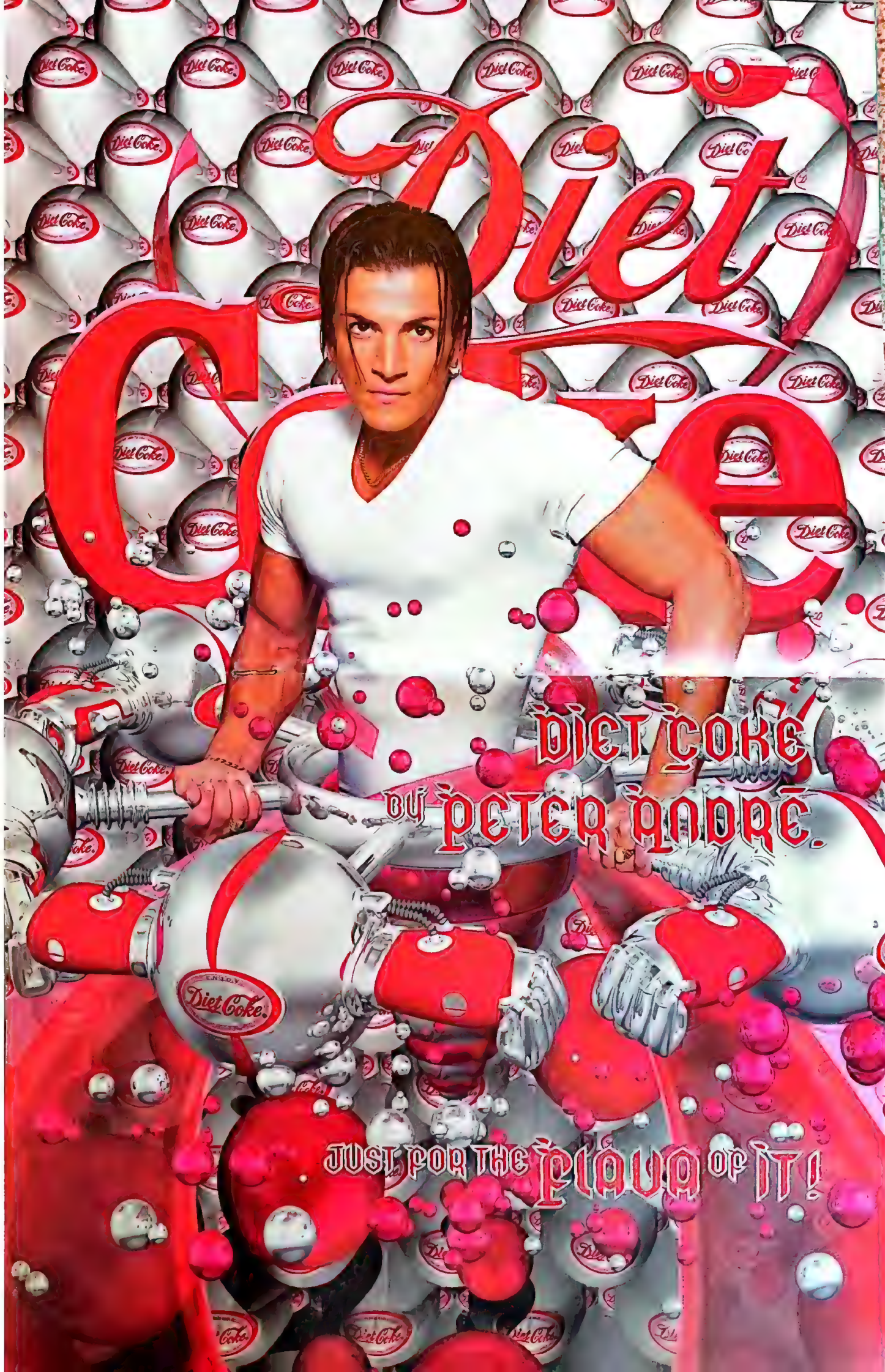
All this is as much a part of me as being a guy. Sadly, society reckons people like me are disgusting. But, as far as I'm concerned, dressing-up is all about pride, understanding girls and looking attractive. Is that really so wrong?"

Advice

- When a boy or man dresses in women's clothes, it's called transvestism. No one knows why some guys do it, but experts say it provides a release for anxiety.
- Unlike transsexuals (boys who'd rather be girls and vice-versa) transvestites are happy with their gender roles. In fact, most transvestites are heterosexual.
- Many boys feel confused about their sexuality. This is normal, and often just a phase. If you know someone who dresses up, don't think they're weird. They may just be curious about gender roles.


If you have a real-life experience to share, send it to 'Reality bites', J17, 20 Orange Street, London WC2H 7ED. Please include your phone number, in case we have to check any facts. If your story's printed, we'll pay you up to £50.





DIET COKE
BY PETER ANDRÉ.

JUST FOR THE PLEASURE OF IT!



robbie williams

just seventeen

Are you a 21st century girl?

Are you techno, techno, techno or oh no, oh no, oh no? Gaze into our, er, quiz and your future will be revealed...

1 To you, surfing is...

a) What you do when you're hooking up with your virtual homies on the 'Net. That's the Internet, dontcha know.

b) A soap powder advertised by those amusing chicks from *Birds Of A Feather*.

c) A boy-babe on a board as the breakers move beachwards. Bee-yoo-tiful.

2 Boys, eh? We all love 'em, but what qualities must a lad possess to get you interested?

a) He has to be caring, kind and considerate. Beauty being more than skin deep and all that.

b) A good sense of humour would be great, especially if he's a Liam looky-likey.

c) You're after a techno boy-babe who owns a big collection of computer games that he doesn't mind sharing.

3 You have a hot date at the weekend and you've spent ages putting together your look. So what'll it be?

a) Your trusty black velvet hipsters with a happening aqua top and that fashionable yet low-maintenance 'bed head'.

b) You've customised your ma's '70s silver jumpsuit for a distressed take on the space theme.

c) A nice twinset and knee-length skirt. You wouldn't want Studly to get the wrong idea.

4 As your date draws to a close, you walk to the top of a conveniently situated hill to gaze at the stars. What do you talk about?

a) That tricky astrological question that teach sneaked into your last science exam.

b) You go into your old routine of naming constellations – thus wowing the guy with your beauty and brains.

c) You imagine what life would be like if you both lived on a space station and hung with Chewbacca-types instead of humanoids.

5 What telly programme do you never, ever miss?

a) *Friends*, *ER*, *Brookie*... the usual.

b) *Two Fat Ladies* – not only is Clarissa your role model, she makes some damn good tucker!

c) Although you love *Star Trek*, you feel that *Red Dwarf* is the most realistic sci-fi series on the box.

6 While we're on the subject of likes and dislikes, what floats yer boat music-wise?

a) When it comes to bangin' toons, *The Prodigy* do it for you. All together: "I'm the firestarter, twisted firestarter..."

b) You like *The Prodigy* too, but sometimes you wish you could hear all the words. In quieter moments, you favour *Kula Shaker*.

c) You love to dig out your olds' Beatles records. Now there was a band...

7 What do you want to do when you're all grown up?

a) Cook delicious meals and tend to your rosy-cheeked tots while you wait for your loving hubby to return from a hard day at the office.

b) Be the first DJ to organise a 'livin' it large' sesh on Mars.

c) Be out there in the cut 'n' thrust, meeting people, closing deals and, er, sending faxes.

8 Finally, what will you be up to on 31 December 1999?

a) Going crazy as you stand on the Greenwich meridian. You've been waiting for this moment for ever.

b) Cowering under your duvet. All this talk of the year 2000 makes you really scared.

c) Having a wilder New Year knees-up than normal. The millennium? Now there's an excuse for a party!

What's the scores, George Dawes?

1 a) 3	b) 1	c) 2
2 a) 1	b) 2	c) 3
3 a) 2	b) 3	c) 1
4 a) 1	b) 2	c) 3
5 a) 2	b) 1	c) 3
6 a) 3	b) 2	c) 1
7 a) 1	b) 3	c) 2
8 a) 3	b) 1	c) 2

8-13 Living in the past

You're unimpressed by all this millennial malarkey 'cause you're still knee-deep in nostalgia. Sure, retro's cool and The Beatles were a mighty fine band, but you've gotta get over this fear of the future. The year 2000 may be an unknown quantity, but unpredictability can be good. Anyway, in a couple of years' time, science boffs might have invented a time machine so you really *can* live in the past!

14-19 Present and correct

You're too busy enjoying the here and now to worry about the future. You may be interested in what will happen to you, but you couldn't give a stuff about space odysseys. Life's too short and there are plenty of things you wanna do *right now*. You're the past, present and future all wrapped up in one girl-shaped package.

20-24 Future female

Hello space girl! For you, the 20th Century is, like, over already. You're itching for the day you get to ride a rocket to galaxies unknown, but until that time comes you'll make do with all things futuristic. But before you hitch a lift on the next space shuttle, remember there's still stuff going on in your '90s neighbourhood that isn't totally yawn-inducing. Honest!

Pure 'n' symbol

You, and you alone

Matey stuff

Sunshine 'n' snogs

Happy days



Aries

(21 March - 20 April)

You'll blow it big time in March. Too late to start back-pedalling, so you'll have to own up to what you've done! April's a great month for getting back into people's good books. But think carefully before asking for more favours. Get out and about, cause planetary aspects suggest your chance of pulling some top titty is excellent! A relationship started in May is likely to go pieces, and a rather cute lad at school might just say yes! If you ask him out on 2 June, 15, 20 and 28 March, 2, 6 and 27 April, 6, 17 and 28 May, 2, 13 and 26 June.



Taurus

(21 April - 21 May)

The new moon on 15 May is a great time to change your image. It will increase your confidence, and you'll adore the male attention your best mate needs a bit low easy in April, but a girl's night out on the 10th will fix that. The planets suggest you could meet a spunk through friends in March. But if you already have a lad, he'll be low on 14 May, or there'll be fireworks 12, 20 and 30 March, 1, 13 and 21 April, 6, 18 and 28 May, 4, 29 and 30 June.



Gemini

(22 May - 21 June)

Mars in Virgo could cause trouble between you and your ride in May. But some really sane, sensible should have sense for the unexpected during April. Difficult, we know, but as long as you are your usual adaptable self, you'll manage splendidly. The full moon on 24 March suggests a lad could be canceled at the last minute. It'll be a quiet April, but come May, your love life will take off like a rocket! 15, 21 and 28 March, 4, 17 and 29 April, 1, 12 and 20 May, 4, 11 and 20 June.



Cancer

(22 June - 22 July)

As May gets underway, you may have to own up to a few naughty things you've done. If you don't, you'll be found out anyway, which is far more embarrassing. A friend may drop a bombshell in April and need your support, so be prepared to drop everything. A certain lad you've never given a second glance takes an interest in you come April. If the feeling's not mutual, you may need to set him straight - gently! In June, you'll be thinking, "How did I not notice him before?" But maybe you should think twice before taking out your mate's brother.



17, 22 and 30 March, 1, 5 and 26 April, 15, 18 and 28 May, 2, 7 and 30 June.

Sizzling spring horoscopes

Wanna know if your life's gonna be full of the boys of spring? J17's astro-love guide reveals all...

Leo

(24 July - 23 August)

Don't let foolish pride stop you from accepting help during April - you need it more than you care to admit. Be tactful when a friend asks for your opinion in March. A white lie (or two) may be necessary for you to avoid hurting her feelings. When a mate tells you not to ask a guy out in April, it's probably because she's secretly jealous. Ignore her advice and do what you think is best. Even your advisers notice that faraway look in your eyes in June, which must mean you're seriously loved up! But don't let their ribbings get to you - they're only trying to make you bluen. 15, 18 and 26 March, 1, 8 and 29 April, 1, 8 and 15 May, 4, 8 and 23 June.



Virgo

(24 August - 23 September)

In June, you want your point of view to be heard, even if it means shouting. But don't go ballistic - it's not worth getting so worked up about. Early April could see you feeling sorry for yourself. So confide in a friend. After all, a problem shared is a problem halved, and all that. You'll come over totally wibblesome about a lad in March. Don't delay - ask him out! A gang of sexy planets make you feel fiery in April, though May and June are pretty low-key - except for June 14! 19, 20 and 23 March, 5, 15 and 25 April, 6, 8 and 22 May, 6, 17 and 28 June.



Sagittarius

(23 November - 21 December)

In May, ladies probe as they arise - don't put 'em off. You may be able to right a wrong in March but don't make this mistake again - your pals won't forgive you twice. In March, you might think leading a guy on is harmless, but how would you feel? Serious smooching may happen in April, so look out! Late May's romantic too. 17, 28 and 29 March, 4, 15 and 30 April, 3, 8 and 18 May, 3, 12 and 28 June.



Capricorn

(22 December - 20 January)

You're taking things far too seriously in April. Lighten up, chill out and take it easy on yourself for a change. You and a mate may fall out in March, but don't let bad feelings linger. Protect your pride and let her know how sorry you really are. In March, it seems everyone has a lad except you. Feel not - someone has his eye on you. You said you didn't like him, but in April you get all poppy. Go for it! The moon in Pisces on 2 May makes you feel wild. 18, 24 and 27 March, 4, 5 and 18 April, 1, 6 and 12 May, 4, 8 and 11 June.



Libra

(24 September - 23 October)

You're not really on top of things in April, so all you can do is put your faith in fate. You're more confident in May - that's a turn-up for the books for you Librans, so enjoy it. If you leave important tasks to make in June, they won't get done. Gem! March is quiet, romance-wise - but come April 12, that lad you've secretly fancied for ages is bound to agree to a date. You can expect a lustful time mid-June, but it'd be wise to do some research to find out if he's really single. 4, 6 and 28 March, 1, 5 and 27 April, 4, 17 and 24 May, 9, 22 and 30 June.



Pisces

(20 Feb - 20 March)

You can't do much about the changes taking place in your life this April, so sit back and enjoy the ride. A row between you and a mate gets May off to a fast start, but don't worry, you'll be buds again before long. Venus zips through your sign in March, making you look and feel fab! If you've been playing hard to get, the stars in May suggest you should let him catch you. You won't meet the boy of your dreams in June, but you'll have fun looking! 23, 28 and 30 March, 1, 4 and 19 April, 9, 17 and 29 May, 5, 11 and 17 June.



Wanna know how to really party? Well, allow Jamie Theakston, party animal extraordinaire, to advise you...

Why do you have a rep as a party animal? "I didn't think I had! I know I'm spotted at loads of showbiz parties, but that's 'cause there's free food and I get fed. Am I useless in the kitchen? No!

Do you prefer showbiz parties or nights out with your mates? "Close mates, definitely. I go to the celeb parties a lot, but it's work. That's where the myth comes from that I only go there on the blag."

What's the best showbiz party you've been to? "The *Evita* party. That was pretty huge. It was in a massive warehouse and they'd employed all these people to dress as Argentinian soldiers. Did they order me to dance? No. They weren't arresting anyone, either. Madonna had her own private room at the party. She was probably on her own, 'cause people were being turned away all night."

What's your worst party experience? "I spent one New Year's Eve on someone's doorstep. I was meant to see in the New Year at some mates' house. But they didn't arrive home 'til about one, so I was left on this doorstep in the middle of nowhere with a bottle of champagne. I popped it on my own on the doorstep at midnight."

How long do you take to get ready for a party? "Normally it's a last-minute affair – I'm not one of those people who spends ages preparing to go out. I just wear whatever's clean."

Do you rave it up when you get there, or just sit in the corner and look sad? "A bit of both. If I'm really up for it, I bounce around and make a fool of myself. Having said that, I've also been known to spend a lot of time in the corner."

Do you get raw with the people on the dancefloor? "I'm the world's worst dancer, and I cause a lot of damage when I dance."

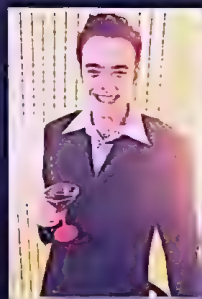
Things get broken. (*Like peoples' legs?*) Oh, ha ha, very funny."

Right, Jamie, let's talk chat-up lines. Are you a believer in them? "What, like cheesy ones? I'm not very good at that kind of thing. Anyway, you can spot naff chat-up lines a mile off, so it's better to avoid them. The worst one is, 'Get your coat, love, you've pulled.'"

Ah, so you prefer to be chatted up? "I'm totally oblivious to female advances. A girl can engage me in casual banter and I'll chat away, not

Yeah, everyone has their 'most embarrassing' story. But try beating Jamie's...

"This New Year's Eve, I went to Iceland with some friends. Over there they have a big family meal on New Year's Day. Anyway, we found these plates of leftover food in the kitchen so we picked at them. But the next day we found out they'd been preparing the meal for the following day – and we'd eaten the lot! What's more, nothing's open on New



Year's Day, so they couldn't feed all their visiting relatives! Then we went on to this really swank ball. When we arrived, this dressed-up guy was greeting everyone. So I gave him my coat and a tip, thinking he was the butler. It turned out he was Iceland's most famous opera singer and was the guest of honour at the party!"

realising there's a hidden agenda. Someone will go, 'She was really keen on you,' and I'm like, 'Was she? Oh.' I'm sure I infuriate girls when they're trying to chat me up."

How would you get away from someone's amorous advances? "I'd pretend to be ill, even if it meant I'd have to leave. I wouldn't like to hurt her feelings by saying, 'Listen, you're far too ugly and boring, so please go away.' I'd just say, 'You've made me ill, so I'm off.'"

Who's your fave person to party with? "He's called Lee and he's my party consort. We go out quite a lot together."

What's your favourite party game? "You can't beat a good game of Twister after supper. I've always wanted to suggest it after a posh dinner, just to see people's faces."

What about spin the bottle? "I don't like that sort of game 'cause I inevitably embarrass myself. Do I have skeletons in my closet? No. I just always lose and end up having to perform a ridiculous forfeit."

What's the worst dare you've ever had to do? "I do remember playing one of those truth or dare games at a party where two ex-girlfriends had turned up. There was one question that would have been hugely embarrassing had I answered it. I remember two sets of eyes glaring at me as I coughed and feigned ignorance."

Any party nightmares you'd like to share? "I threw a party where I ordered lots of non-alcoholic beer by mistake, which was a bit of a disaster. I thought it was a snazzy German lager, so I ordered four crates. Yeah, that party really rocked."

Ever thrown a party without telling your parents? "Yeah. Surely everyone has? I don't remember causing major damage. To this day, I deny that there ever was a party, although they did suspect me."

Which celeb guests would you ban from your party? "Upside Down would be asked kindly to move on for being naff. And Anthea Turner. I find her irritating. All irritating and boring people would be banned."

Ever had to call the police to one of your parties? "At one party, we set the DJ up in the kitchen but his DJ table pushed against one of the gas knobs on the cooker. Gas started escaping and ignited into this tiny pilot light. I remember walking into the kitchen – the place was packed, there must have been 400 people in this tiny flat – and panicking. I said, 'Right, the party's over 'cause the oven's gonna explode.' Someone rang the fire brigade and they piled into the flat, but it was embarrassing 'cause there was just this little flame. The firemen stayed for a bit, took off their helmets and had a little dance."

Jamie's guide to parties

Raveheart

Here are Jamie's seven deadly rules for making sure your party goes with a schwing!



1 The venue

"Very important. I'd love to hold a party in a huge gothic castle in Scotland, with everyone wearing kilts."

2 Music

"Yup, that's an important part, too. I'd have two or three bands playing live, with a DJ in-between."

3 Guests

"My dream guests would be the Spice Girls, 'cause they'd be great. And lots of very attractive girls as I'd be the only man there. But not supermodels – they're boring at parties. You'd need someone who gets things rocking."



4 Don't be shy

"Actually, I think I've become more shy the older I've got. Do I have any tips for combating shyness? Yeah. Get out more!"

5 Avoid parental hassles

"Tell them parties are part of your social education. It's important to develop meaningful relationships with other people, and you can only do that by entertaining. If that fails, you're knackered and you'll just have to trade in your 'rents for new ones."



6 Clearing up

"Put down a huge tarpaulin before the party. Afterwards, wrap it up like a huge bin liner and just chuck it away so you don't have to do any hoovering. Easy!"

7 Pulling a good 'un

"I'm not the best person to ask 'cause I'm pretty hopeless at it. But make sure you're in a well-lit area so you can see who you're pulling. If you're in a dark corner, you could make a disastrous mistake."

Just Seventeen ★ 31

ckin'!



Pink lurex V-neck top
£35.99 by **Tattoo**
Pink perspex thong **50p per metre** from
any good haberdashery department
Blue and brown striped skirt
£20 from **Miss Selfridge**



Pink and white sleeveless top **£16.99** by **Body Best**
Yellow floral shorts **£39.99** by **Elite Models Fashion**
Rubber bangles **£1.50** per set from **C&A**



Blue patterned mesh top **£21.99**
from **Kookai**
Blue coat-dress from a selection by
Hysteric Glamour
Blue striped lycra flares **£30** from
Miss Selfridge





parallel universe

Do not adjust your television set
– the stripes have taken over...

Blue striped V-neck top
£21.99 by **Body Best**
Blue PVC pencil skirt
£34.99 by **Tattoo**
Pink tights **£4.99**
by **Jonathan Aston**
from most major
department stores

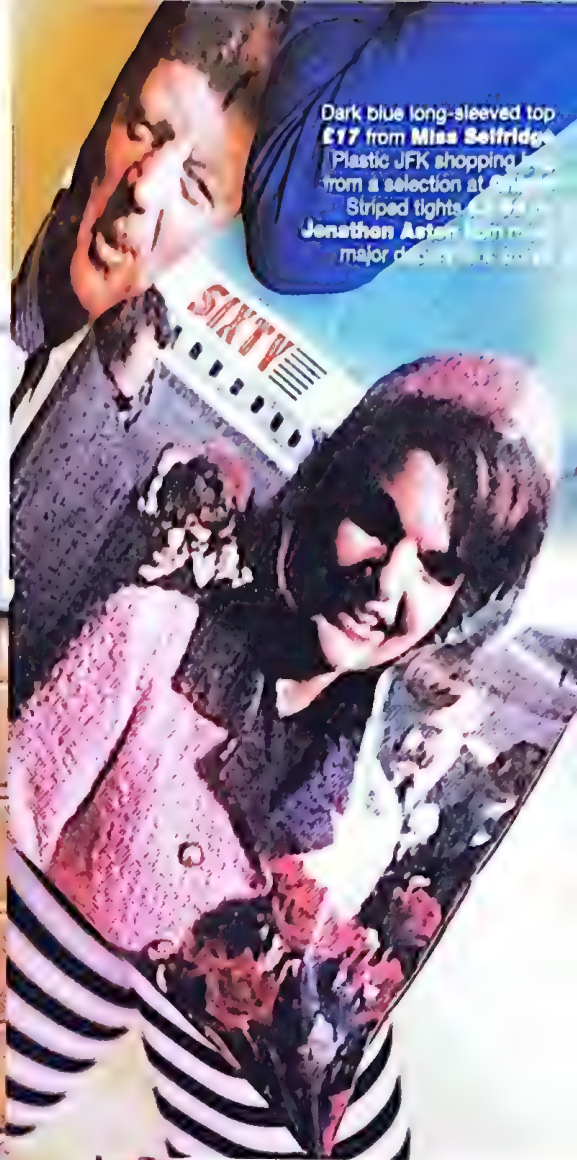
Second-hand blue striped shirt
£13.99 from **Rokit**
Pale blue knee-length skirt
approx. £30 by **Chatters**
Red belt **£12.99** by **Pepe**

Photos: **Tom Corbett**
Model: **Heather**
Hair and make-up: **Claire-Ann Ray**
Fashion: **Lara S**

parallel verse



Brown striped V-neck top £24.99 and blue skirt £16.99 both from H&M Hennes



Dark blue long-sleeved top £17 from Miss Selfridge
Plastic JFK shopping bag from a selection at £10
Striped tights £4.99
Jonathan Aston from most major department stores



Blue linear patterned £12 from C&A
Purple tights £4.99 by Jonathan Aston from most major department stores



Turquoise sleeveless top £29.99 by Tattoo
Green and brown striped skirt £14.99 from H&M Hennes

Close encounters

Be perfectly prepared for those intimate moments with four top tricks for immaculate make-up...

1 Eye spy

Under-eye concealer is the best secret weapon for natural looking make-up. A tiny dab can light up any scary-looking face.

- ★ Always apply concealer in good light. Stand in front of a window holding a small mirror if necessary.
- ★ Use different concealers for spots and eyes. A stay-put, opaque formula is best for spots, but a light reflecting version gives more flattering shadow coverage.
- ★ Apply concealer with a make-up brush. You only need a tiny



amount, and a brush is a daintier applicator than your finger. But if you really can't be bothered with a brush, just use your little or fourth finger.

- ★ All you need to cover up is the diagonal line of dark colour which runs downwards and outwards from the inner corner of each eye. Don't try to cover up the entire under-eye area.

All the best: Under eyes

J17 likes **Colourings** Lightening Touch **£4.25**, and for spots, **Cover Girl** Cover Stick **£3.49**, **Colourings** Lipstick/Concealer Brush **£2.25**.

2 Powder points

Ultra-shiny disco make-up is smart for nights out, but for an everyday natural look, matt skin is more flattering. Powder can also help to even out skin tone and keep your base in place.

- ★ Loose powder is messy and bulky to carry around – but it gives a much better result than pressed powder. Hey, nobody said life was easy! Keep your pressed powder for on-the-go touch-ups and invest in some loose powder for your dressing table.



- ★ Go for translucent powder, and spend a bit more cash on it if you can – the more expensive powders are more finely ground, which gives you a more even, transparent-looking finish.

- ★ For long-lasting make-up, use a powder puff to apply your powder rather than a brush. Dip the powder puff (or a cotton wool pad can do just as good a job) into the powder, then press (don't rub) lightly all over your skin.

All the best: **Bourjois** Loose Powder **£6.50**.

3 Lashing out

Mascara is essential for a naturally gorgeous look. Done properly, it makes your eyes look bigger and brighter.

- ★ For a wide-eyed look, heat eyelash curlers with your hairdryer, then squeeze your upper lashes at the base and middle.
- ★ Choose a thickening or lengthening mascara. If you have very blonde or ginger hair, go for brown mascara, not black.



- ★ Before you apply mascara, roll the brush in a tissue to remove clumps and bend your mascara wand as shown in the picture.

- ★ Wiggle the brush into the base of your lashes, then roll the brush upwards.

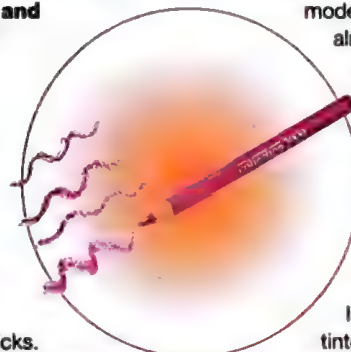
All the best: Our favourite thickening mascara is **Revlon** Quick Thick Mascara **£5.95**. Our

favourite lengthening mascara: **L'Oréal** Lash Out **£4.99**.

4 Born lippy

For a perfect pout, use lipliner to even out and emphasise your smackers, and keep your lippy in place.

- ★ The prettiest colour lipliner is a soft raspberry shade. It looks more modern than a Pamela Anderson-style brown lipline, and tones with this spring's pink lipsticks.
- ★ Rub in lipbalm, then while it softens your lips, sharpen your lipliner and roll the tip between your



fingers to check for jagged bits.

- ★ Make-up artist Claire tells models to keep their lips almost closed and smile when applying liner, rather than stretching their lips taut. That way you can see what shape you're getting.
- ★ After lining your lips, fill in with lipstick – or use a tinted lipgloss, blending well to soften your lipline.

All the best: **Collection** 2000 Lip Liner 'Wine' **£1.19**.



Beauty & fashion

MOST WANTED

Best buys and hot hair 'n' slap tips...

Blonde ambition

Wanna know the hottest hair colour for spring? J17 spies in America say gals are queuing up at salons to have baby blonde highlights added to their locks. Top UK colourist Daniel Galvin says it's all thanks to new movie chicks like Brad Pitt's soon-to-be missus and Emma actress Gwyneth Paltrow, *She's The One*



star Cameron Diaz and cool Brits Kate Winslet and Patsy Kensit. Find out whether blondes really do have more fun by going for a lighter colour. But be warned, it takes a lot of looking after and a bit of dosh to keep dyed-blond hair in good condition - and forget it if your natural colour's mid-brown or darker. Ask your local salon for advice before taking the plunge.



Homely girl

If you thought the old skool trainer had followed Britpop down the dumper, think again! The humble shell-toe has been pumping iron and is now a lot stronger, tougher and ideal for skaters and tomboys alike. The new and improved Adidas footsters cost £55 and are available from our fave shop, Home. Now you know where they're at, you have no excuse!



The future's bright, the future's stripey... and available from any branch of Benetton.

Colour by numbers

Check out their new spring/summer range, which is affordable as well as smart. A pair of denim shorts will set you back £25 and their classic rugby shirts are only £35 (we love the pink ones!). So get yerself and yer mates kitted out for the summer - well, it's only a couple of months away, after all!



Our favourite's favourite

America's favourite supermodel Cindy Crawford knows how to make the most of her looks. After years of pinching make-up tips from the professionals and practising on herself in front of the mirror, the one make-up bag essential she swears by is a taupe-coloured

eyeshadow to highlight her eye colour yet maintain a natural look. She goes for Revlon Custom Eyes in 'Taupe Star' £4.95. If you're counting your pennies, J17 recommends Collection 2000 Single Eyeshadow in 'Bambi' £1.19.



Watcha! Keep an eye out for me - Kat, yer resident style queen - from 2 April!



In the pink

In case you hadn't noticed, pink is the essential make-up colour this spring. And, as if by magic, J17 has come up with a fab lippy and nail polish set to keep you in

Win!



Trend City! We have 120 sets of Rimmel Fashion Plus Lipstick in Sugar Plum (worth £1.69) and Rimmel Fashion Finish Nail Polish in Icing Sugar (worth £1.69) to give away. Send your name and address on a postcard to:

J17/Rimmel offer, Quick Print, The Studios, Charthan Road, South Norwood, London SE25 4HW. Winners will be picked at random after 4 April.

Shock tactics

Believe the hype, 'cause here's the sequel! Following on from the mass hysteria caused by the ultra-cool 'Baby G' watch, Casio are set to create a new commotion. May sees the launch of a limited edition G-Shock watch, available for around £50 in a variety of aquatic colours with a luminous whale and six cartoon dolphins on the face. Dive into any good sports/ jewellery shop (or call 0800 387146 for mail order) and become a waterbabe!



Where it's at!

B Benetton 0171-731 4564	H Home 39 Beak St, London W1, 0171-287 3708
B Body Best 0171-323 0302	H Hysteria Glamour 0171-224 2656
C C&A 0171-829 1244	J Jonathan Aston 0116-286 2388
C Chatters 0171-436 3585	K Kookai 123 Kensington High Street, London W8, 0171-937 4411
C Chiple 3 Langley Court, London W1, 0171-494 1240/01527 61828	M Miss Selfridge 0171-436 8280
E Elite Models Fashion 0171-637 9526	P Pepe 0171-836 8666
G G-Shock Watches 0181-450 9131	R Rokit 0181-801 8600
H H&M Hennes Oxford Circus London W1 0171-255 2031	T Tattoo 0171-543 5050

denotes mail order

Hot tip: Got static hair? Try water, hand or body lotion... or a pro's anti-static sheet!

*Have we got some
gossip for you!*



Find out what it is on April 2nd

GET DOWN TO YOUR NEWSAGENT
THE TRUTH IS IN THERE

advice

Write to: Anita Naik, Nick Fisher or Annabel G, Advice, Just 17, 20 Orange Street, London WC2H 7ED. It would be helpful if you could include your age and the area you live in. Unfortunately Just 17's Advice columnists cannot answer your problems on the telephone. If you have an urgent problem, please contact ChildLine free on 0800 1111 - we work very closely with them - or Careline on 0181-514 1177 (calls to Careline will be charged at the local rate and will appear on your phone bill).

She's so annoying

I really care about my best friend, but she's really getting me down. She gets herself into one mess after another and always comes crying to me about it. Last month, she two-timed her boyfriend and got caught. This month, she has a new boyfriend but doesn't like him anymore. She said she wanted to dump him, so we spent hours talking about it. Then, the next time I saw her, she acted like she was really in love with him and got mad when I asked if she was going to dump him.

Then, this morning, she was back at my house crying over fancying someone else's boyfriend. Help!

Fed-up (15), Doncaster

● Some people like turning everything into a drama. Your friend sounds like one of those folk. She probably isn't happy unless there's a crisis unfolding in her life. If this is the case, it's a waste of energy for you to get worked up too. Don't let her pull you into her dramas. Give her your advice once and if she doesn't take it, step away. As much as you care for your friend, you can't live her life for her. She knows how to solve her problems and make life easier for herself - she just doesn't want to.



No-one likes me

My family and I moved two months ago, but none of the girls at my new school want to be my friend - they laugh at me and say I speak funny. I've told my parents what's going on, and they say the girls will soon come round. But these girls just ignore me and

walk away when I try to be friendly. Seeing people talking to their mates at school makes me want to cry. I'm so lonely.

Blur fan (14), Brighton

● It is really tough being made to feel the odd one out. But I think your parents are right that these girls will eventually come round. Until then, why not look further afield for friends? You could ask your parents if you can join some kind of group outside school. How about getting a pen friend or contacting some of your old friends? I know it's not the same as having a friend at school, but at least you'll have someone to share things with. It'll also be a big boost to your confidence.

I tried to kill myself

I get really down and I don't know why. Sometimes my life seems so bad that all I can think of is killing myself. I never used to be unhappy all the time, so I can't work out what's wrong. My mum often tries to find out why I keep crying, but I don't think she'll understand, so I pretend it's nothing. A few weeks ago, I took an overdose because I couldn't take it any more. I woke up in hospital - my sister had found me and called an ambulance. Now everyone thinks I'm crazy and I have to see a psychiatrist. The thing is, I've fooled her into thinking I'm OK, so she hasn't helped. I don't know what to do.

Anon (15)

● It's a myth that psychiatrists deal with 'crazy' people. The fact is, they're there to help people who are distressed, and there's no surer sign of distress than a suicide attempt. By 'fooling her', you're really cheating yourself. She can help you, but first you have to let her. This means you'll have to stop pretending everything's OK. You, your mum and your psychiatrist all know it isn't. Feeling



despair, alienation and misery are all signs that you're depressed and this is why it's important for you to talk to someone. Depression can be dealt with - all you have to do is trust someone to help you.

He puts me down

I really love my boyfriend, but he's so horrible to me. When we're out, he picks on me and says I should make more of myself. Sometimes he flirts with my friends - who ignore him - then slaps them off. Once I threatened to leave him, but he just laughed and said I was so unattractive that if I did, no other boy would be interested. I'm worried he's right and I'll end up lonely and unhappy if we split up.

Spice Girls fan (15), London

● Being single doesn't equal loneliness and misery. On the other hand, being with someone who is mean to you does! Whatever your boyfriend says, you deserve someone a million times better than him. Someone who'll like and respect you and won't put you down just so he can feel big. Don't listen to his pathetic warnings - he knows full well that he's the one who's so unattractive that he won't find someone new. If a friend told you her boyfriend was treating her like this, I'm sure you'd be the first to tell her to dump him. So be a real friend to yourself and leave him straight away!

Be sure, be safe and remember sex under 16 is illegal



Anita Naik

She's so bitchy

Our so-called friend Suzanne always has to be the centre of attention. She's bitchy to people's faces, but gets away with it because she's so funny. Lately though, she's got worse and even started on all of us. We're fed up but too scared to confront her. **Boyzone fans (13), Southport**

● Standing up to a bully is never easy, especially when she's a friend. If she frightens you, why not talk to her as a group. Try not to be threatening – after all, this is exactly what you're trying to stop. Also, think about your role in all of this. Maybe she only acts that way because she's been allowed to get away with it. If you want her to change for the better, you've got to stop backing her up. Don't join in when she ridicules someone. After all, a bully is nothing without her clique!

body talk

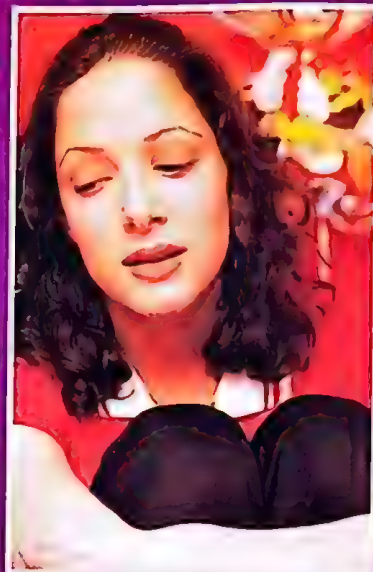
Uneven breasts

I'm a 14-year-old girl with an embarrassing problem – my breasts are different sizes. I try my best to disguise it, but my right breast is noticeably bigger. Now I'm scared there's something wrong with me.

J17 fan

● We all know that breasts grow at different rates for different girls. But it's also a fact that they hardly ever develop at the same pace on any one girl. This is even more noticeable during puberty.

In time, your breasts will most likely even out. But remember, like most parts of the body, breasts are never exactly the same – most women have one slightly bigger than the other. I know you feel self-conscious about them, but rest assured, no-one will spot the difference but you.



How to help yourself:

- Try not to develop a breast fixation. As long as you don't keep talking about your breasts, no-one will notice the size difference.
- Make sure your bra fits properly and allows for any growth in your breasts. Most good department stores offer a service for the fitting of teen bras.
- Don't slouch when standing or sitting. Besides being bad for your posture, this will only make your breasts more noticeable.

WIN! WIN! WIN! P-Ash-ionate prose

Ash's 77-97 is the book for fans of the tasty trio, loaded with twoasome pics, cool quotes and juicy gossip. We have 30 copies up for grabs (worth £9.99 each). So if you wanna drool over Tim, Mark and Rick, complete the following Xword and send it to: **J17/Ash, Prize Xword 451, 20 Orange Street, London WC2H 7ED by 28 March 1997.**



ACROSS

- 1 See photoclude (8,5)
- 7 Neighbours' wannabe fashion designer (5,5)
- 9 — Child (East 17) (3)
- 11 — Of The Gun (Sharon Stone movie) (4)
- 12 Louise Wener and co (7)
- 13 Watchdog presenter Beer (5)
- 14 Backstreet or Pet Shop perhaps (4)
- 16 Ryan Giggs' nationality (5)
- 17 Could be either R2D2 or C3PO from Star Wars (5)
- 18 Wise bird found in Biff Fowler's middle (3)
- 20 LP or where you keep your photos (5)
- 22 Recent blockbuster starring 1 down (5)
- 24 He's Steve McDonald's brother in Coronation Street (4)
- 25 Gillian from The X-Files (8)
- 26 Jeronimo who plays Linda in Emmerdale (7)
- 27 Backbeat star Stephen (5)

DOWN

- 1 Ms Ciccone (7)
- 2 BabyBird's sweet female (5,4)
- 3 Coronation Street's Vera Duckworth (9,4)
- 4 Jared who played Jordan in My So-Called Life (4)
- 5 Raiders Of The Lost — (Harrison Ford movie) (3)
- 6 Neighbours character who shaved his head (4)
- 8 The Blue Boy's request (8,2)
- 9 If It Makes You — (Sheryl Crow) (5)
- 10 Fergie is Duchess of here (4)
- 15 Party Of Five star (5,4)
- 16 This Adam is Ian in EastEnders (8)
- 19 East 17's capital record label (6)
- 21 Ricky Butcher's motormouth girl (6)
- 23 Star sign for those born between August 24-September 23 (5)

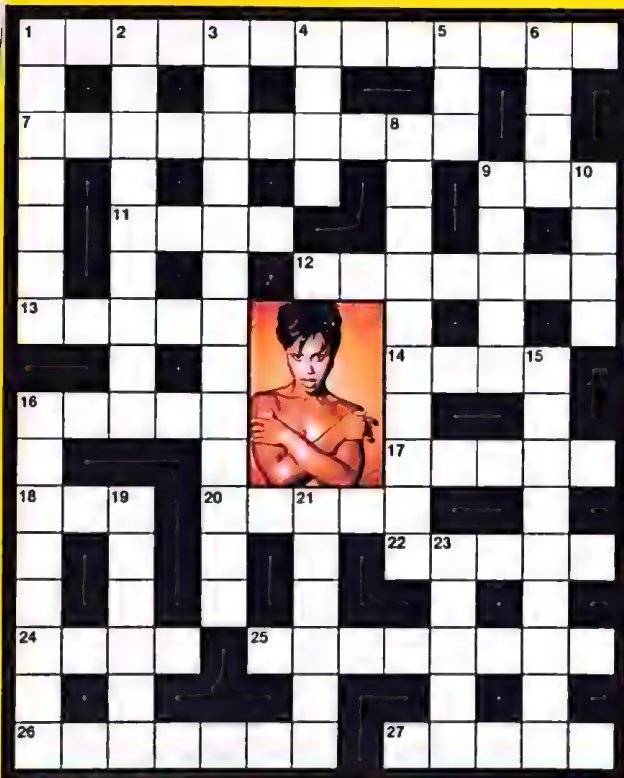
Answers to Xword 449 5 March

ACROSS: 1 No Mercy; 7 Bianca; 8 En Vogue; 10 Mel; 11 Strum; 12 (Broken) Arrow; 13 Lois (Lane); 14 Three; 15 & 4 down Aston Villa; 17 Dodgy; 19 Hannah; 22 Hollyoaks; 24 Ruud (Gullit); 27 EMI; 28 Gen; 29 & 14 down Father Ted; 30 Teenage (Fancub) DOWN: 1 Noel Gallagher; 2 Mavis Wilton; 3 Rogers; 5 Underworld; 6 Barb Wire; 9 Emma; 18 Noah (Wyle); 19 Yasmine (Bleeth); 20 Homer; 21 Claire (King); 23 Organ; 25 Utah; 26 Dahl

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

XWORD 451



Get to those phones!

Page 5: Win sensational Giorgio Aire scent
Phone your answer on 0891 408839

Closing date for competitions 28 March 1997. Please remember that calls to these lines are more expensive than ordinary calls. You should always ask the permission of the person who pays the phone bill before making the call. Calls are charged at 50 pence per minute at all times.

boy's view

For a boy's view on your problems, write to Nick Fisher, Advice, Just 17, 20 Orange Street, London WC2H 7ED. He's happy to answer letters from male readers too.



Nick Fisher

I want to help my ex

I've recently split up with my girlfriend after five months, because she suddenly said she no longer wanted to go out with anyone. I think I know the reason: she's been having problems at home with her older brother. I want to help her, because I still really care, but I doubt she'd accept it. Worried Man Utd fan (15)

● Wanting to help your ex is very caring. But you can't help someone unless they're willing to accept your help. The best you can do is offer, then say you'll be there for her. You might also consider writing to her. It's to your credit that, after all that's happened, you feel no animosity. But being honest, don't you feel a little angry? Or that if you stick around, she'll come back to you? It's perfectly normal to feel hurt or hold out hope, and what's more, it's good to be able to admit it.



He's a chameleon

At school there's a boy I really fancy and I know he likes me too, but you'd never guess it from the way he treats me in class. He's a bit of a lad and is into winding people up. He makes fun of everyone, including me. But at the end of the day, he often walks back home with me. Then it's like he's a different person – really sweet and understanding. I'd like to ask him out, but I'm scared of making a move in case he just laughs. What's his problem? Betty (15)

● Boys who see themselves as a bit of a lad will spend too much time trying to wind people up. They think it's funny and that it makes people like them. But as you've found out the hard way, it can be very off-putting, especially for a girl, because it leaves you not knowing where you stand.

It sounds as if this boy's a bit

immature and unsure in company, so he compensates by trying to be funny. He can't relax like he does when he's with you.

Of course, if you ask him out, there's a risk he might tell everyone in a foolish display of laddishness. But so what? If you like really him, try and talk to him in private. If he just laughs, it's his loss. You'll never know unless you try. So if knowing is important to you, you've got to take the risk. Do it!

I hate my body

If there's one thing I've never been happy with, it's my body. Most boys I know wouldn't think of asking me out, and I'm sure they make fun of me when my back's turned because I'm not as slim as the rest of my mates. Despite this, I always make a big effort when I go out by wearing nice clothes and make-up. But as soon as I come face-to-face with a guy,

my confidence deserts me and I feel like an over-made-up clown. My insecurity is really getting me down. Anon, Wales

● Nobody is truly comfortable or happy with their body image. But sometimes this insecurity and shyness is a good thing. After all, if feeling a bit insecure makes you someone who's friendly and prepared to take an interest in others, you'll always be liked. Besides, there's no need to be as slim as others. Not all boys want slim girlfriends, and many don't care so much about looks – they're more concerned with meeting a girl they feel comfortable with.

It's good to make an effort with the way you look, but don't give yourself a hard time for not being what you think is perfect. It's better to be easy-going and to have time for others than become too wound up about yourself.

They call me queer

I'm a very worried 15-year-old boy. I was sleeping over at my friend's house the other night when he started to get changed for bed. I suddenly glanced at his naked body but for some weird reason, I couldn't look away. Then, to my horror, I realised I had an erection. The same thing happened in the school showers. Now everyone calls me queer and teases me about it all the time. I'm so embarrassed and ashamed. Anon

● During adolescence, boys and girls may experience strong feelings of sexual attraction to members of their own sex. Often this may be because it's only the same sex with whom they have any intimate contact. Also, your sexuality is only just developing, and it may be over-active and unpredictable. As you mature, your sexual instincts and

attractions will begin to settle down and become more defined. And even though someone feels strong homosexual urges at 15, it doesn't mean they will at 19.

Remember, a great many boys – including the lads in the school showers – experience exactly the same type of confusion you do, so it's not as drastic as you think. You're by no means alone.

I snogged his mate

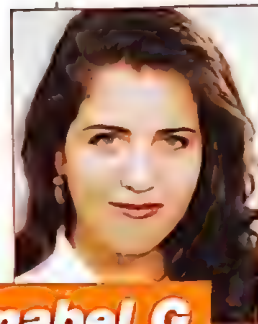
Until last month, I had a really good thing going with my boyfriend. He always gave me tons of respect and made me feel really special. Then I did something stupid – I got off with his best mate. It didn't mean anything to me, but my boyfriend found out and it ruined everything. Now he's making my life hell by calling me a slag. How can I get him to understand that I never meant to hurt him? I just want things back the way they were. Jennie (15), Kent

● I know you deeply regret what you did, but the hurt your boyfriend feels is very real. Understanding that is a good lesson to learn. Other people get hurt by our actions, even if we're doing something that feels meaningless to us. Your boyfriend's hurt because he's been deceived by you and his friends have probably mocked him over it. But that doesn't give him the right to call you a slag. You can try and explain to him how sorry you are, but you can't make him feel differently. If his name-calling gets too abusive, you could talk to a parent, a teacher or an adult you trust and get them to make him stop.

In the meantime, don't kid yourself that something will go unnoticed just because it feels insignificant to you. Think how you'd feel if it had happened to you. There's a lot to be said for treating others how you'd like to be treated yourself.

confidential

Send your sex-related problems to Annabel G, Advice, Just 17, 20 Orange Street, London WC2H 7ED. It would be helpful if you could include your age.



Annabel G

Sperm confusion

My boyfriend and I were talking about contraceptives the other day. He reckons that if you have sex more than once, you only need to use a condom the first time. He also claims a lad can only come once a night because he'll have used up all his sperm until the morning. Is this true?

Spice Girls fan (16)

● No, this is absolutely not true. Your boyfriend's ideas are very confused! I don't think he's deliberately lying, but he's got things horribly wrong. Every time a boy has an orgasm (and it can be many times a night if he's up to it!) he ejaculates semen and this fluid always contains baby-making sperm.

So if you make love at 9pm with a condom and again at 11pm without one, your boyfriend could still make you pregnant. The golden rule is to keep an uncondomed penis away from your vagina at all times.

Why not visit your local Family Planning Clinic together (in your local phone book under Family Planning) for free advice. Contraception's a joint responsibility and you clearly need some sound advice and information.

Foreplay explained

I've heard the word foreplay used a lot when people talk about sex, but I'm not sure what it means. I'd like to find out more, but I'm too embarrassed to ask. Help!

Ant and Dec fan (14)

● Foreplay takes place immediately before sexual intercourse. Basically, it's the word for when a couple make each other increasingly aroused before penetration takes place. They may kiss, hug and stroke each other. (They may also have oral sex, which involves kissing and licking one another's genitals.)

Many women need some form of foreplay before intercourse, as getting turned on makes the vagina become moist and this natural lubrication makes it easier for the penis to enter.

Lots of couples indulge in foreplay but don't then have full intercourse. It's fine on its own, and cuts out the danger of getting pregnant.

The seX Files

A recent World Health Organisation study found no evidence that sex education leads to early or increased sexual activity. In fact, sex ed appears to delay or even minimise sexy encounters.

The seX Files

The Economic and Social Research Council reports that a couple are less likely to use contraception if: there's a big age gap between them, the sex isn't planned, the relationship's new or if they've drunk alcohol.

Is my vagina normal?

I was looking at my vagina the other day and I noticed it's got two holes. I know one of them is for sex and stuff, but what's the other one for? I'm too embarrassed to ask my mates in case they think I'm weird. I've never had a proper boyfriend so I want to know what this hole is before I do.

Confused (13), Birmingham

● Don't fret, my friend - there's nothing funny going on here. Every girl in the universe has this second wee hole - wee being the operative word! The hole you refer to is strategically placed so you can, ahem, spend a penny. Yes, this is the small opening where your urine comes out.

But it's not meant for sexual activity. It is far too tiny to allow a finger or any tackle to enter it. And remember you are three years below the legal age of consent, so please don't consider intercourse until you're 16.

How safe are condoms?

I'm having sex with my boyfriend and we always use condoms. I told my best mate this, and she says I could still get pregnant. Is she right? I'm really worried.

Anon (16)

● There's no such thing as safe sex, only safer sex. Condoms can help to protect you from pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS. But no contraceptive method (other than saying no) is 100 per cent safe, and there's always the danger that condoms will rip or fall off.

If used properly they're 98 per cent safe: research has shown that over a year, two out of every 100 women using condoms get pregnant. So, every time you have sex you take a slight risk. That's why it's important that you're mature enough to deal with a sexual relationship and the possible consequences.

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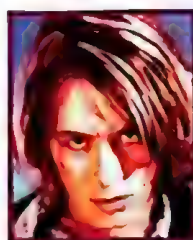
turn on tune in turn on

tv

Don't miss this

The Essential Mark Owen

The time: 10.30am, Mon 24



March
The place: MTV
The buzz: A half-hour spesh devoted to the boy wonder, looking at what Markie's been up to since Take That.

Madison

The time: 6.30pm, Sat 22 March

The place: Trouble, Bravo.

The buzz: It's kit-off time as Rachael (daughter of gnarly old rocker Phil Collins) 'christens' the trendy cafe Lavaland with the man she's got the serious hots for - her boss Neil.

Star Trax: Oasis

The time: 12pm, Tues 25 March

The place: MTV

The buzz: Part of MTV's Spring All-Stars week, this programme sees the Gallaghers waxing lyrical about their favourite videos -



everything from Kula Shaker to Bob Marley. Expect a disagreement or two.

Soap Central

Switch on to our weekly round-up

Brookside

At yet another therapy sess, Georgia tells Nat she's had an abortion and it finally dawns on Bel that Nat and Georgia really are in love. Ron wonders if the future of his empire is as bleak as it seems, and his ex-snog Jackie has to choose between the baby and Jimmy - the bigger baby.

Emmerdale

Butch and Marion take an axe to the opposition's burger van, and Dee is reduced to tears when Vic asks Eric if he can buy her for the night. Donna, Robert and Andy get drunk on Alco-pops.



Hollyoaks

Jambo loses his job at the garden centre. Baz turns up battered and bruised in hospital and on-the-spot reporter Ruth wants to use the attack as a story for her mag. Lucy sees Spike and his mates outside The Dog. Uh-oh!



EastEnders

God-squadder Sarah is gobsmacked by Alistair's passion for congregation member Sue. Later Sarah orders a pizza, which comes courtesy of Robbie - along with an almighty tongue samie! But then she disappears and everyone blames Robbie.

Neighbours

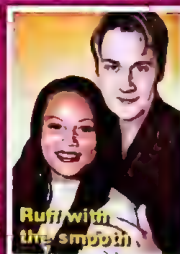
Will the Rebecchis leave Erinsborough? Danni doesn't care - she's soaping it up in a hot tub with Steve. Billy and Toadie live out their pirate radio dream, while Joe says goodbye to Ramsey Street. Ex-jailbird Darren and ex-nerd-bird Libby spill their guts about... a baby?

Home and Away

Strewh! Marilyn susses that Fisher's had an affair with Catherine (Shannen's ma), so she goes doolally and trashes the Tupperware. Rebecca and Anderson the sax player start making beautiful music and Casey realises she's not cut out to be a surfer chick, so she snogs Liam.

Coronation Street

Maxine asks Ashley to model for her hairdressing display, and Fiona and Alan hit a rough patch. Then the last remaining McDonald with any sense starts hitting the bottle and missing college, after hearing about his wayward ma's relationship with Fraser.



film

Space Jam (15)

The deal: It's that tired old, animation-meets-basketball scenario again (only joking), which sees top



US hoop-shooter Michael Jordan teaming up with the highly-animated Bugs Bunny.

What's up, Doc? You'd be a loony toon to miss it. And it's top film if you wanna impress a hoop-crazy lad.

What next? Who Framed David

Beckham?



On screen: 21 March
Woody

video

Twister (PG)

When two scientist ex-lovers meet up, their emotions become as twisty-turny as the tornadoes they're chasing. Watch out for the now infamous cow scene, and prepare to be sucked right into the heart of the action. One fab flick.



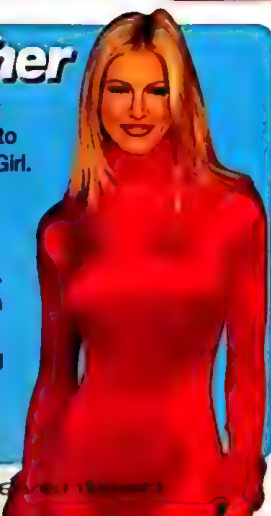
To rent: 21 March
Dawn



It's not her

Caprice Bourret

Caprice would like us all to know she's not an It Girl. "To me, an It Girl's quite pathetic - just going to parties and living off her parents... That's not me." Catch Caprice in Channel 5's *Hospital* with Greg Wise. "Woo-oo! He's cute," says Little Miss Not It.



What I watch, what I eat

"I slice up a boiled egg and put a layer in a lasagne. It impresses people because they're not sure what that big white lump is as they tuck in. I always eat it while watching *Casualty*. It's a fun way to start the weekend 'cause you can cheer yourself up with the thought you're not dying." Happy-go-lucky Saturday night viewing for Massive presenter **Carryl Varley**



Ant and vic

Shock frock horror! Dec once thought about becoming a vicar. "I was reading through the Bible and thinking about things, and I thought maybe I could do it. I really respect priests, but in the end it wasn't the right thing for me - I had to go and be a pop star instead." So does he still think priestly thoughts in his flat with Ant? "I've still got two crucifixes in my room and a bottle of water from Lourdes next to my bed."



tune in turn on tune in tu

music

You might know **Dru Hill** from their last chart troublemaker, **Tell Me**. But we wanted to get to know the boys a little better. Tell us more, Nokio...

So how did you all get to know each other?

"We all kinda knew each other vaguely, then a friend got us jobs making fudge in San Francisco.

We'd make the fudge, then sing for all the customers."

Do you all hate fudge now?

"Yeah. We couldn't eat it while we were working, 'cause if

you ate too much you'd just feel sick. I never touched the stuff."

How did you all learn to sing in harmony?

"I've played and sung in all kinds of bands, and some of the others had formal training or learned in church. They're all good ways to learn."

Dru who?



How does it feel to be so successful, especially across the pond?

"It's like a dream come true – we've been waiting for ages for this to happen. Now we've got a chance to shine, we're ready for it!"

Album of the week



Cream Separates

Various

If you're after the cutting edge of dance music, look no further than this triple album set, mixed by top DJ bods Darren Emerson, Deep Dish and Les Rider, and Paul Bleasdale. And if any of the CDs in the set don't take your fancy, worry not, 'cause they're all available separately as well! So you don't have to shell out loads to get hip. Bargain, eh?

Spin It or Bin It



way cool



wa-heh



what ever



wussy

Ruth I Don't Know

Another cute Britpop band.



This is a happy-go-lucky trip through

the land of guitar, but we're getting kinda bored with this stuff.

Good to sing along to in the bath, though.

Casino Sound Of Eden

Woooh, it's a spooky, atmospheric dance anthem. A hit from yonks ago, this beauty is back and seriously kicking (as

they used to say in the old days), '90s style.

ROC Cheryl

This one's for video game addicts.

Not only does it have a fabulous, future-pop backing, there's also a good smattering of cute girly vocals over the top.

Play it before a trip down the arcade.

Tall Paul Rock Da House

If you like your dance music muted but pumpin', this is for you. Paul has one of the weirdest nicknames around – maybe his mate Stretch

(who's remixed this with his pal Vern) helped.

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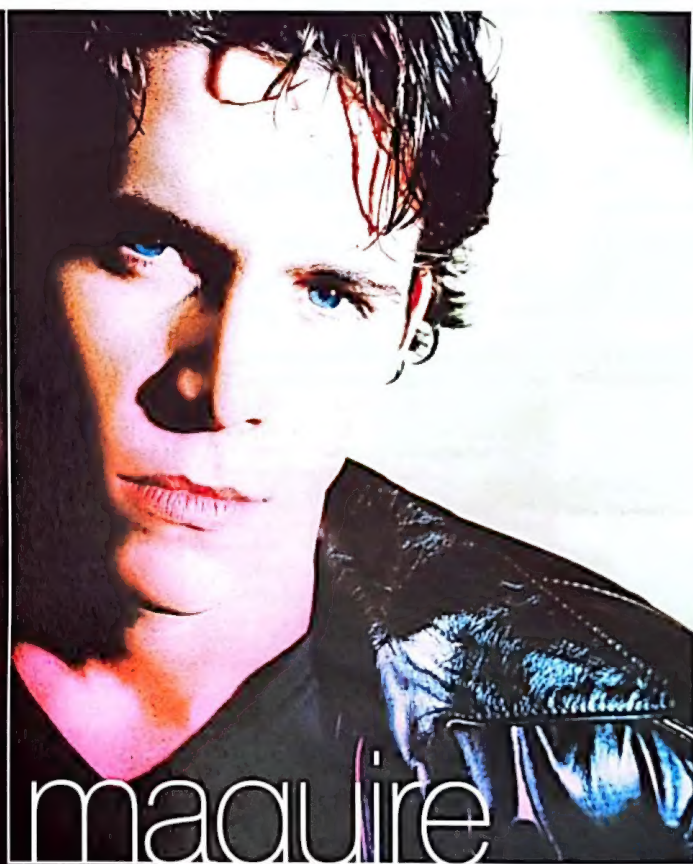
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TODAY'S THE DAY

Day by day

HOROSCOPES

by Jon Ryder

Potential
snog
day

Wed
19 Mar

Thu
20 Mar

Fri
21 Mar

Sat
22 Mar

Sun
23 Mar

Mon
24 Mar

Tue
25 Mar

Aries
21 Mar-20 Apr

You've got to realise that today's actions will have further consequences. It's not just for fun, you know. So be careful...

You've been slow about the message about the feelings. He's been start looking up on lost time, again.

Why are you telling such stories? There's no real need, and anyway, the truth is more flattering than any tall tale.

You can't tell whether your mate's winding you up or not. But if she isn't, and he does fancy you, it could be rather interesting.

Love planet Venus enters Aries today, so you've got all the 'fluences focusing on you. Can true love be far away?

The way he treats you when you're out with your friends is a major embarrassment to all concerned. Him, you, and them.

It's not what you do, it's what you know that counts, isn't it? You know what the others don't today, and that gives you a head start.

Taurus
21 Apr-21 May

You know he said it, but now he's back-peddalling frantically. No doubt he has a reason, but you can't work out what it is.

The longer you put off doing it, the longer it will stay there putting pressure on you. You know what to do. So sort it out!

You've said you would, and everybody's waiting to see you do it. If you want to keep any cred at all you'd better get on with it.

A surprise phone call today, from someone you've never known very well. What could they possibly want?

Seeing stars for today. Mr. Horoscope, action is right for unexpected, but the source of it all could be quite unexpected.

You're able to hide your pain today, but that's no reason to carry on suffering. Get to grips with this whole thing, and soon.

Don't read too much into what you hear today. It's good news, sure - but it certainly isn't the world. Just let things unfold.

Gemini
22 May-21 Jun

Definitely a good idea day. Go with what you think is right, and you'll demonstrate just how inventive you can be.

Yesterday you couldn't put a foot wrong. Today's the exact opposite. Keep everything simple, and go with the flow.

What you're planning may work for now, but it'll cause trouble later on. Still, perhaps you can fix things when the time comes...

You're not sure if you love him as much as you're pretending to, but you're enjoying it anyway. Actually, he feels the same way.

Parental wrath's on the agenda today. Can't say you weren't expecting it. You know exactly what it's about, and it's your fault, too.

C'mon, it's time to drop all this pretence, and come clean. You're not really into the idea, so why waste energy pretending otherwise?

You've made your decision, but feel a bit funny about it. Sometimes things aren't black and white - this is one of those times.

Cancer
22 Jun-23 Jul

Be extra-perceptive today - you'll need to be, or you may find that things are moving on without you. Which could make you uneasy.

Aye aye! A stonkingly good day and no mistake. Whatever you try your hand at will work like a dream. Magic!

Well, now. There's a bit of a problem here, but with fact and determination it shouldn't prove too tricky. You can do it!

The tide of public opinion is against you - all your mates reckon you shouldn't do it. But you know how you feel - and you're right.

Are you going to admit how you really feel about it all? And will everyone cheer when you go for it? Wait and see...

The big confrontation with your folks isn't going to happen after all. You don't know quite why, but you're not complaining.

You're a touch sensitive to criticism right now. What people say is only an opinion. They have theirs, you have yours.

Leo
24 Jul-23 Aug

Oooh! Lots of gossip to be had today. Could the juiciest bit really be true? Wait for some firm evidence before you swallow it all.

It's not like you to avoid doing something when you know you it has to be done. But for some reason you do exactly that today.

The rumours are now so unbelievable that you know they can't be true - but it's hard to say you don't care, 'cause you do.

Watery influences abound. Either you're flaunting your bod at the pool, or you get caught in the rain. Either way, you're wet!

A strange enthusiasm for schoolwork grips you. This is highly suspicious - there must be a lad involved somewhere.

Two weeks ago you were mad keen to go, but now the event's actually here, you're not bothered one way or the other.

You and he were a team before, then you weren't. But now you're again. D'ya think you could you make yer mind up, please?

Virgo
24 Aug-23 Sep

You're being very, very subtle. I know you want to make sure you get your message across, but you could at least be polite.

A last chance, the stars say, to talk to him before he decides he'd be better off with somebody else. Waste no more time!

Wednesday you were angry, yesterday - desperate. Today you get it right. Not used to operating at this level of emotion, are you?

Sweet and smoochy planetary patterns show that last night you did get the message across after all. Pure bliss.

Family arrangements force you to go where you don't want to, and do what you don't want to. You seethe. It's just not fair!

The dosh you were hoping for - and need - looks like being delayed. Maybe you won't get as much as you expected. Bummer!

A talk with M'n'D about this cash crisis of yours could be useful. Just make sure you don't lose your rag, that's all.

Libra
24 Sep-23 Oct

What you and he have going has to stay between you and him for now. This isn't the time to tell the world everything.

Serious discussions on a serious subject. Don't think the other person is playing around, 'cause they're not. Hmm...

People at home are being oddly evasive and not giving you a straight answer. What could they not want you to know?

Your imagination's going crazy. You're making up stuff to fill in all the gaps where you don't know the truth. Calm down!

A highly passionate new era opens up today, according to the planets. As if you needed any more encouragement.

You've got to do something about this relationship, and it's no use waiting for him. The next move has to be from you.

One of your secrets slips out, and everyone is gobsmacked. So you have to decide whether to tell them the whole story.

Scorpio
24 Oct-22 Nov

You thought you wouldn't be too bothered, but how wrong you were. Well, you know what you've got to do about it.

It might help if you were a little vague when a mate asks you some questions today. No lies, exactly, but don't give too much away.

If you need help with something that's, well, boy-shaped, ask that lad you're friendly with. It could be the start of something.

This new friendship has definite love possibilities, and the planets are working to bring you closer all the time. Interesting...

You get all embarrassed today, and reckon you're making a big fool of yourself. It's not true, but you feel that way all the same.

At last, a chance to bury one of your least favourite episodes from the past, forever. Tear it up, throw it away, burn it, whatever.

Fine day for Scorps of all ages. Days as good as this are rare, so it's worth a small celebration. Have two scoops instead of one.

Sagittarius
23 Nov-22 Dec

Your folks usually say they don't care as long as you're happy with it. But this time you've gone too far. They're not amused.

You've been sizing a certain person up for some time now. Now's the time, you reckon, to convert the fantasy into reality.

They'll go ballistic when they find out how much it cost. Simple answer - don't tell 'em. Say you got it in a sale.

You are nothing if not direct, and phoning up and asking for a date, just like that, is about as direct as it comes. What's more, it works.

The passion pressure the planets are exerting just gets worse and worse. If things don't start to happen soon, you'll go mad.

You'll probably lose a few friends over this, and as for your parents - well! But somehow it all seems worth it. Scorchio!

The shockwaves didn't cause as much damage as you feared. In fact, you're sort of famous, in a small kind of way.

Capricorn
23 Dec-20 Jan

You needed her to be there for you, and she wasn't. So why should you be there for her now? 'Cause you're nice, that's why.

There are things you do when you're with him that you'd never dare do otherwise. And you're loving every minute of it.

Your answer's firm, and you can't be persuaded to change your mind. Nor will you explain why you feel that way. It's personal.

Escape seems to be the theme for today. Treat yourself to a movie and a big tub of popcorn. Put the world to one side for a while.

Get to the bottom of what went wrong on Wednesday, and apologise. There's no need for you to be enemies any longer.

You're fed up with your image. It's too ordinary, too predictable and too nice. Guess it's time surprise a few people.

You're beginning to realise you were wrong about something or somebody - but you'd prefer not to admit it publicly.

Aquarius
21 Jan-19 Feb

There's no doubt about it - you and he were made for each other. How come you never realised it could be this good before?

It's a great idea, but it would cost more than you've got. And if you're honest, it's better to keep it as a favourite dream...

But it's OK to share it with him. If you two are as close as you think you are, he'll think it's a brilliant idea too.

You're pushing your luck here, but the stars are encouraging and you can probably get away with it. Don't be too smug though!

You're being especially persuasive, and you can get anyone to do anything for you. Almost anything, anyway.

Be prepared for a tough time. The planets aren't being very helpful at all - but it's only for one day, and you can handle that...

Heavy phone day, as the planets send messages across the heavens, and you do the same. Don't you ever stop to eat?

Pisces
20 Feb-20 Mar

You hear someone having exactly the same conversation as you had the other day, but you've never met. Parallel universe stuff.

The Sun shines on your own personal planet today, so you feel good even if it rains on you. As if it would dare!

Friendly, cheeky, tease-each-other sort of day. Is there a deeper attraction between you, or is this as far as it goes?

Time to explore that deeper attraction. If you don't know by the end of today, then you can't be sure that the answer's no.

It's possible someone's trying to pull a fast one here, though you're not sure. Don't cause a fuss at once - wait to see if things get clearer.

Desperate times call for desperate measures, but what you have in mind isn't ideal for this situation - as you ought to know.

Well, you feel good about it, and that's what matters. How he feels is something else - and frankly, you really don't care.

Happy birthday to you! Damon Albarn, who's 29 on the 23rd. Let's hope it doesn't pass in a blur

7 days of groovers 'n' schmoozers

Looks like cheeky Blur fella Damon should cut down on his porklife, and get a bit of exercise



All this talk of marrying Patsy and settling down has put years on Liam



The FBI are investigating alien involvement in Gillian Anderson's dress. Until then, the cleavage is out there...



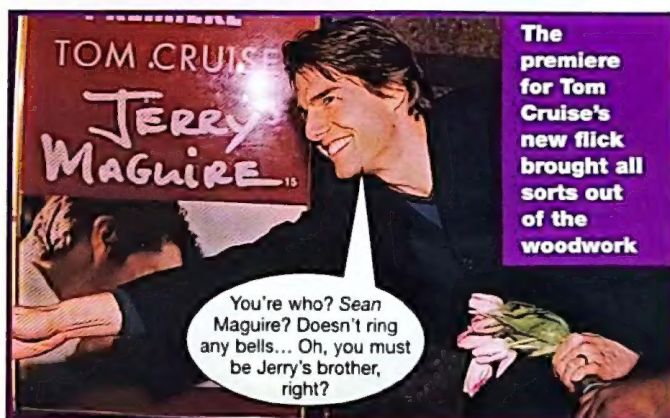
Quick flash!

Cower with fear, Mr/Ms Celeb. Our Chongy has a caption with your name on it...

East 17's John and Terry look pail-faced at a Shelter charity do



Michael Jackson stuck to Elizabeth Taylor's arm like a limpet with a mucus problem at her umpteenth birthday bash



It's tough when you're hungry in the 'hood, but Robbie Williams has a solution



Self-styled footie expert (ahem) Dani Behr starts to slip down the table of the TV celeb Premier League



Julia Roberts attempts to add another string to her, er, bow at The Hasty Pudding Awards



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